



Pray for the Nation ~ INOI MO TE MOTU

Intercessors for New Zealand

105 Woodman Drive, Tawa, Wellington 5028, New Zealand

ifnz@xtra.co.nz www.Pray-for-the-Nation.org

FEBRUARY 2017

Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the Good News [Gospel] of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Good News." (*Mark 1:14-15*)

Try Repentance ! The choice is ours!

Luke 13:1-5

There were some people present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. Jesus asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way, they were worse sinners than all the other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen people who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them – do you think they were worse offenders than all the other people living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did."

Two points:

- Those who suffered and died were no worse than other sinners.
- Unless we repent, we will all perish.

Some people are waiting for Wellington to be hit by a massive and destructive earthquake, even after the 7.8 magnitude earthquake which hit recently, although, by the grace of God, no-one was killed or injured in Wellington.

Scientists can *predict the probability* that an earthquake of a certain magnitude will hit Wellington in the next so many years, but this is merely a prediction based on past very variable data about earthquakes, their magnitudes and how likely they may be to occur again.

Very sadly, some people seem to even have a sadistic *desire* to see Wellington destroyed by a massive earthquake in order to fulfil prophecies that this will happen!

God doesn't work by statistics! God can bring, or withhold, judgement as He chooses, and ultimately it is **His** choice, not statisticians or scientists!

Twice in the above Scripture, Jesus talks of sinners and repentance. The crux of what Jesus was saying was that the people who died were not *worse sinners* than others, but if we don't repent we may all perish – physically and/or spiritually.

Sin is not something to simply ignore and try to forget; it is something that must be dealt with.

There is very little mention of repentance today – especially in the secular world, and even in the Christian world. People feel that they can do what they like; they are not answerable to God (if they believe in God) or to other people for their wrong behaviour. Even in the Church, and in sharing the Gospel with people who are not yet Christians, there is little – if any – mention of the need to repent and what that entails!

In the Authorized Version of the Bible (King James Version), repentance and its derivatives (repent, repents, repented, repentance) occur **65 times** in the New Testament alone! (Plus **40 times** in the Old Testament). It is a fundamental part of the Christian faith and Christian life on a daily basis! It is a fundamental part of preaching the Gospel. It is a fundamental part of salvation. We dare not ignore it or refuse to preach and teach about it.

On the final Day of Judgement we will all have to give an account of how we have lived (Romans 14:10-12; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Hebrews 4:12-13); and anything we have not repented of, and from which we have not been cleansed by the blood of Jesus, we will have to give account for. "What can take away my sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus!" But that is not automatic – the blood of cleansing comes after repentance and confession of our sins to the Lord God Almighty, the Judge of all the earth and its peoples.

Jesus has told us what we should do when someone wrongs us, or who sins against others (for example, in the church) – see Matthew 18:15-22 and Luke 17:3-4. Tragically, many Christians get wounded by other Christians or the church, and often it is not dealt with in the way Jesus has told us. One of the tragedies of "wounded Christians" is that they leave the church and often have anger, bitterness or resentment against those who wounded them, and sometimes even towards God Himself.

We need to confess what we have done wrong, and ask forgiveness of those we have wronged. If they refuse to forgive, that is their choice – and their problem; we have done what is required of us and we are free.

If someone has wronged us, we need to go to them and do our best to sort it out. If we have been wronged and the other person refuses to admit wrongdoing or ask forgiveness, then we must still forgive. We have done what God requires of us and we will be free.

In either case, **confession** of what has been done wrong, **repentance** for the wrong-doing, **asking forgiveness**, and (if possible) receiving forgiveness from the wronged person, is what is required. The fruit of true repentance is then shown by a changed behaviour in future!

If we care for the Church; if we care for our city or town; if we care for our nation – we need to repent ourselves and confess our sins to God, and call other people to do the same. Then God, the Righteous Judge, will act accordingly. But if wickedness increases and prevails,

then the Righteous Judge, merciful though He is to repentant sinners, may choose to bring judgement upon our cities and nation.

Let's try repentance!

[The Good News is that "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" – 1 John 1:9 – therefore we can have fellowship with the Lord, and eternal life!]



BIBLE STUDY

A MEDITATION

1 John chapter 1

We, the apostles of the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, declare to you what we have heard from the beginning – what we have seen, what we have looked at, and touched, concerning the Word of Life. This Life was revealed to us, and we have seen and bear witness to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us. We declare what we have seen and heard so that you also can have fellowship with us – and our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus, the Messiah. We are writing these things to you so that our joy may be full.

This is the message we have heard from Him and proclaim to you – God is Light, and there is absolutely no darkness in Him at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him while we are walking in darkness, then we are lying and not doing what is true. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light then we have fellowship with each other and the blood of Jesus, God's Son, washes us from all sin. If we say we have no sin then we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God, Who is faithful and just, will forgive us our sins and wash us clean from all unrighteousness. Besides, if we say we have not sinned then we are calling Him a liar, so His Word is not living within us.

1 John chapter 2

I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if we do sin, we have an advocate with the Father – Jesus Christ the righteous one. He is the sacrifice Who atones for our sins, and not only for our sins but for the sins of everyone.

This is how we can be sure that we know Him – if we do know Him, we will obey His commandments! Whoever claims to know Him but does not obey His commandments, is a liar – the truth is not in him! But whoever obeys His Word, truly the love of God has reached perfection in them. So, by this we can be sure

1 John

that we live in Him – whoever says they live in Him ought to live just as He lived!

Friends, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment that you heard in the beginning. Yet I am writing you a new commandment that is true both in you and in Him, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. If anyone says "I live in the light" while they hate a brother or sister, then they are still in darkness. Whoever loves a brother or sister lives in the light and there is therefore no cause for them to stumble. But whoever hates a brother or sister is living in darkness, and does not know the way to live because the darkness has brought them into a state of blindness.

I am writing to little children because your sins are forgiven through Jesus. I am writing to fathers because you know Him Who is from the beginning. I am writing to young people because you have conquered the evil one.

I write to children because you know the Father. I write to fathers because you know Him Who is from the beginning. I write to young people because you are strong and the Word of God lives in you and you have overcome the evil one.

Don't love the world or the things in the world. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world, because all that is in the world – the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride in riches – comes not from the Father but from the world. And the world and its evil desires are passing away; but those who do the will of God will live forever.

Children, this is the last hour! As you have heard, the Antichrist is coming; indeed, many antichrists have already come and so we know it is the last hour. Antichrists went out from us, but they did not belong to us, because if they had belonged to us they would have remained with us. So by going out they demonstrated that none of them belonged to us. But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and all of you have knowledge. So I am writing to you, not because you don't know the truth but because you know it and know that the truth doesn't contain lies. Who is the liar? The

one who denies that Jesus is the Messiah. This is the antichrist – the one who denies the Father and the Son. No-one who denies the Son has the Father but everyone who confesses the Son has the Father also. So let what you heard from the beginning remain with you, and then you will abide in the Son and the Father. This is what He has promised us – eternal life!

I am writing this to you about those people who want to deceive you. But as for you, the anointing which you received from Him lives in you, so you do not need anyone to teach you. His anointing teaches you about everything; it is true and doesn't lie; so just as it has taught you – live in Him!

Now, little children, abide in Him so that when He is revealed we may have confidence in Him and not be put to shame before Him, when He comes!

Prayer Suggestions

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, after He had created everything in them, He created a man (*Adam*) and placed him in the perfect earth which He had created. Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." So God created a woman to be his wife, and the man named his wife Eve (*Living*), because she was the mother of all living people. Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. (Genesis 1:1; 2:18, 24; 3:20)

NEW ZEALAND MARRIAGE WEEK – 7-14 February

God knew what He was doing when He created Adam and Eve and brought them together as a husband and wife; a man and a woman. From their union as one flesh, ultimately came all the people who have ever been born. But, of course, they sinned, and we have all sinned, and spoiled what God created and purposed for us and for our blessing. While we live in a very imperfect world because of sin, we must never lose what God has intended for us – the blessing of the marriage of a man and a woman, and (usually) the gift of children as a result. Plus the love of a husband and wife for each other, and their mutual support, friendship and fellowship.

Tragically, in recent generations, we have increasingly deviated from what God has told us concerning human relationships as far as marriage is concerned – to the detriment of families, children, homes, and society as a whole.

From **7-14 February** each year, we celebrate NZ Marriage Week and pray for a return to Godly values and principles for our homes and families, and our society. For further details, please see www.marriageweek.org.nz

Please pray:

- Praise God, He wants to bless us, as individuals, husbands and wives (if we are married), children, families and our society.

- Pray for God to forgive us for all the issues and ways which we have followed that are contrary to God's Word and therefore detrimental to us, as well as offending God.
- Please pray for people and families you know who are struggling with their marriage or relationships.
- Pray especially for Christians – that they will seek God's will for their marriage and family.
- Pray that the ways of God concerning marriage and relationships will be strongly taught in all churches.
- Pray for children who live without one or both of their parents, and for children who are living in situations where they are abused, neglected or do not experience the love of father and/or mother.
- Pray that more and more, people will see the value and importance of living in a life-long, committed marriage relationship where they honour, love and respect their husband or wife, and bring up their children in the ways of God.

THE MEDIA

The media have a **huge** impact on the way people think, and therefore act. The media can present the "news" or "facts" as they want them to be perceived. They may be one-sided, manipulative and persuasive, even if they do not intend to be. They probably have more impact on our knowledge and ways of thinking than even our schools, educational institutes and parents. People follow other people's examples (especially what the "majority" think or do!) Of course, the majority may well be wrong, for we are all human (and sinful) but lies and wrong ideas weaken us in times of temptation.

Please pray for the media – newspapers, radio, television, online, social media, advertising.

Pray for the Christian use of the media to share the Gospel, encourage people to seek God, live by God's principles and Word, to live lives that will honour God and bless other people.

Pray against every attempt of the devil and the enemy to destroy lives through lies and deception.

The LORD is my light and my salvation – who shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid? ... My heart says, "Come, seek His face!" Your face, LORD, do I seek. ... I believe that I shall see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. ... Wait for the LORD; be strong and let your heart take courage. Wait for the LORD! (Psalm 27:1, 8, 13, 14)

THIS YEAR

What will happen this year? Literally, God only knows! However, the above verses encourage us to Pause ..., Pray ..., Listen ..., Obey ...! They also encourage us **not** to be afraid – the LORD is our light: He gives us direction – His Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. The LORD is our Saviour – He has saved us from sin and eternal judgement, and He will save us from all evil, making us overcomers through Him. The LORD is our Protector (the "Stronghold of our lives"). We need to **Pause** and wait on Him. As He leads us by His Spirit we need to **Pray**, for prayer is not just praying with our intellect and reasoning, but by divine revelation – walking and praying in the Spirit, rather than in the

flesh. We need to **Listen** – what is He saying? What is He doing? What do we need to be doing? For we need to **Obe**y what He says, and is doing, and what He wants us to do! As we do this, we shall see the goodness of the LORD – even in the midst of all the wickedness we might see in the world around us. So ... let us **Pause, Pray, Listen, and Obey!**

LEADERSHIP

There are many changes going on in the leadership of nations, and we need to **Pray** concerning the leaders in the nations, especially of our nation (whatever nation we may live in!) **Pray also** for those who work with and under them, and especially their advisors.

Please pray for:

- Donald Trump, President of the United States
- Vladimir Putin, President of Russia
- Xi Jinping, President of China
- Kim Jong Un, President of North Korea
- Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel
- Theresa May, Prime Minister of Britain
- Malcolm Turnbull, Prime Minister of Australia
- Bill English, Prime Minister of New Zealand
- ... and any other countries the Lord may be leading you to pray for.

REFUGEES

Imagine being forced to flee your country in order to escape to safety. If you were lucky you had time to pack a bag. If not, you simply dropped everything and ran. Refugees are people fleeing conflict or persecution. They are defined and protected in international law, and must not be expelled or returned to situations where their life and freedom are at risk. At UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), we have been assisting them for over half a century. Life as a refugee can be difficult to imagine. But, for *nearly 20 million people around the world*, it is a terrifying reality. **[The above paragraph is from UNHCR's website homepage]**

Most of us in New Zealand probably have very little idea of what being a refugee is like – we take so much for granted. **Please pray** for all refugees in New Zealand, and throughout the world. **Pray** that they will meet with loving, caring Christians and their families, as well as others who will help serve and minister to them. Some of their greatest needs are for homes, finance, language learning, adjusting to cultural differences, health issues, lack of even basic needs, the effects (often long-lasting) of the situations they have come out of – what they have suffered in their homelands, and what is still going on there to other family members and friends. **Pray** for these and other major needs they have. **Pray too** for a major breaking down of the factors that lead to there being refugees!

Pray for the Nation ...

BIBLE STUDY BOOKS

“Lord, Teach Us to Pray (Part 1)”	Studies on prayer and intercession	\$10 each *
“Lord, Teach Us to Pray (Part 2)”	Further studies on prayer and intercession	\$10
“Spiritual Warfare through Intercession”	Studies on spiritual warfare through prayer	\$15
“Soldiers of Christ – Arise!”	Spiritual warfare and our victory through Christ	\$ 8
“Pray for the Nation!”	Praying for cities and nations	\$12
“18 Pillars of Prayer”	18 prayer themes for the nation and its government	\$ 5
“Principles of Revival”	Bible studies on the theme of revival	\$ 9
“Holiness”	Studies on holiness in the life of the believer	\$ 9
“The Church”	Church life, ministry, structure and functioning	\$ 7
“The Bridegroom and His Bride”	The Bride of Christ waiting for the coming Bridegroom	\$ 9
“Jesus Christ – Son of God & Son of Man”	The deity and humanity of Jesus the Messiah	\$12
“Acts of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles”	Studies on Acts and its relevance today	\$ 9
“Let the Prophets Speak”	Studies from Joel, Haggai & Revelation (chapters 1-5)	\$ 9
“Are You Enjoying the Spirit-filled Life?”	The fullness, gifts and ministries of the Holy Spirit	\$15
“Principles of Evangelism”	Sharing the Christian faith with other people	\$ 7
“Now I’m a Christian – What Next?”	A manual for new Christians on the Christian life	\$ 7

* 5 or more copies of the same book: \$2 per book cheaper. Prices include postage in New Zealand.

Books may be purchased:

Online: Order your books from **Intercessors for New Zealand** ifnz@xtra.co.nz and pay online to IFNZ, ANZ Bank, Johnsonville 01-0519-0007997-00 Your books will be posted after the receipt of payment.

By mail: Order from Intercessors for New Zealand, 105 Woodman Drive, Tawa, Wellington 5028 and write your cheque to *Intercessors for New Zealand*.

Pray for the Nation, 105 Woodman Drive, Tawa, Wellington 5028, New Zealand

Please note the change of address. Our PO Box address will be closed at the end of March 2017

Weekly *Prayer Updates* can be found on our website: www.pray-for-the-nation.org/prayer-updates.php

This monthly *Prayer Letter* is also on our website: www.pray-for-the-nation.org/monthly-magazines.php