



## Pray for the Nation ~ INOI MO TE MOTU

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Jesus said, "I AM – the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No-one comes to the Father except through Me."  
(John 14:6)

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### **Walk in the Light !**

***The choice is ours!***

God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him while we are walking in darkness, we are lying and are not doing what is true. But if we walk in the light, as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He Who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we are calling Him a liar, and His Word is not in us. (1 John 1:5-10)

#### **WALK IN THE LIGHT**

In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was shapeless, empty, and darkness covered it. Then God said, "Let there be light", and there was light! God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. (Genesis 1:1-4)

It was always God's intention that we should walk in the light and not in the darkness. Walking in the light leads to eternal life, but walking in the darkness leads to eternal separation from God, for God is light. Tragically, in today's world, the vast majority of people are walking in darkness. It may be the darkness of unbelief; it may be the darkness of worshipping false gods and bondage to religion; it may be the rejection of truth; or the mixing of truth and lies, leading to deception; it may even be knowing the truth and knowing something of the light, but not walking in the full light.

In the garden of Eden, God placed two trees – the tree of Life, and the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. God told Adam that he could eat freely from any tree except the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, because in the day that he ate of it he would die – become separated from God (Genesis 2:9, 15-17). And we all know what happened – Adam and Eve both ate the fruit of that tree; they were cast out of the garden of Eden, kept from the tree of Life; and there is no further record of Adam and Eve having any other communication with God, even though Adam lived to the age of 930 years! (Genesis 3:22-24)

#### **PLEASE PRAY:**

**For all those who are true Christians**, having put their faith in the Lord, being saved from sin, and following Him as His disciples. For those who truly love and serve the Lord, God has given the gifts of revelation, knowledge, wisdom and discernment – revealed through His Word, by prayer and waiting on (listening to) God. Pray that we will not only *know* the Truth, but *walk (live)* in the Truth, and lead lives that bring joy to our Lord because of our obedience.

**For all true Christian churches**, where God is honoured and glorified, worshipped and served. Pray that our churches will truly be led by people of God who listen to Him, and follow His calling and His leading. Jesus is building **His** Church (not "our" church) – pray that He will truly be the Head of all fellowships of believers who meet together, and that He will be served faithfully as He leads by His Spirit.

**For our Government.** Pray for all our leaders, and especially those who are Christians, that we will be led in good and Godly ways that will bring blessing to our people because of our obedience.

**For our nation.** Pray for all our people – especially pray for their salvation. Pray for such an outpouring of God's Spirit upon our land that literally thousands of people will turn to the Lord and become saved, believers, and followers of Jesus Christ. This is our only hope as a nation.

**For the nations of the world.** The world is a very, very troubled place. We are in the last days, and some things will not get better, but pray that even in the midst of darkness and fear, God will draw people to Himself – that people will cry out to Him, reject the darkness, and receive the light and life of His salvation!

Pray that people everywhere will turn from darkness, recognising its bondage to fear and evil. Pray that the Holy Spirit will bring Light and Truth to people; that they will see through the deceptions of false religions and atheism. Pray that people will hunger and thirst for a much better way of life – God's way, of Love, Truth, Purity, Light and Life eternal. Pray for the billions of people who have yet to hear the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and be saved from darkness, sin and hell.



## His name is *J e s u s*

### 1. *Son of God & Son of Man*

Just over 2,020 years ago, a baby was born whose life changed the world forever! His name *is* (not “*was*”) Jesus, for He is still alive today!

In the Gospels of Matthew and Luke His genealogy is traced back through both His father Joseph (Matthew 1:1-17) back to Abraham, and His mother Mary (Luke 3:23-38) back to Adam.

The miraculous thing about His birth was that He was born to a virgin – divinely conceived through a human mother! So Jesus was both the Son of God, through the Holy Spirit, and also the Son of Man, through Mary (Matthew 1:18-25).

An angel of the Lord told Joseph that Mary would have a child Who would be named Jesus (Saviour) because He will save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). While Joseph probably found this very hard to believe, he accepted what the angel told him.

Some time after Jesus was born, wise men saw His star in the sky, and followed it because they recognised that this was a unique and divine sign that would lead them to the King of the Jews. Because of this, they brought Him gifts of gold for a King, incense for His High Priestly ministry, and myrrh for His death and burial – three prophetic gifts concerning His role as King, High Priest and Saviour through His death on our behalf (Matthew 2:1-12).

The Hebrew Old Testament Scriptures contained a number of prophecies concerning the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. These Scriptures also told of the coming of the Messiah (the Anointed One; “Christ” in Greek) and the Jewish people were waiting for and expecting the soon-coming Messiah.

Matthew, for example, quotes the following Old Testament prophecies concerning His birth:

A virgin will conceive, bear a Son, and He will be called Emmanuel (God with us) – see Matthew 1:23, quoting Isaiah 7:14.

Jesus would be born in Bethlehem as King of the Jews – His rising star in the East indicating His

Kingship. He would be both a Ruler and a Shepherd of God’s people Israel. See Matthew 2:5-6, quoting Micah 5:2; see also Psalm 72:10-11 and Jeremiah 23:5-6.

Luke tells us of the words given to Mary in Nazareth before Jesus was conceived: she would have a Son Who would be called Jesus – the Son of the Most High, King on David’s throne (King David was a human ancestor of Jesus), He would reign over Israel forever, His Kingdom would never end (it would be eternal). He will be uniquely holy, and be called the Son of God. See Luke 1:26-38, quoting Isaiah 9:6-7 and Daniel 2:44-45; 7:14, 27.

In Luke 2:1-40 we read about how and why Mary and Joseph had to leave their home in Nazareth and travel about 145 km to Bethlehem, where Jesus was born, as prophesied in Micah 5:2. Again this was divine intervention, because the Scriptures said Jesus would be born in Bethlehem but Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth – why should they go to Bethlehem? These verses in Luke 2 speak of Bethlehem, Jesus as Saviour, Messiah (Christ, the Anointed One), and the Lord (v. 4, 11).

When they returned to their home in Nazareth, “The Child (Jesus) grew and became strong, was filled with wisdom, and the favour of God was upon Him” (Luke 2:40).

So, Jesus is ...

- The Son of Man (Mary, a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob/Israel, Judah and David).
- The Son of God by His miraculous birth through the Holy Spirit; Son of the Most High.
- The King of Israel, and of the Kingdom of God – seated on an everlasting throne.
- The Shepherd.
- The Messiah (the Anointed One promised in the Old Testament – Daniel 9:24-26).
- The Lord. Nine times Jesus called Himself “I AM” – using the divine name, Exodus 3:13-15. See John 4:26; 8:24, 28, 58; 13:13, 19; 18:5, 6, 8. He also said “I am the ... Door, Good Shepherd, Way, Truth, Life, Resurrection and the Life, Bread of Life, Light of the World, True Vine, God’s Son.”

- The Saviour of those who put their faith and trust in Him.

After Jesus rose from the dead, Thomas said, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in His hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails, and my hand in His side, I will not believe.” So Jesus appeared to him and Thomas said, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus replied, “Have you believed because you have seen Me? Blessed are those who have not seen [that’s us!] and yet have come to believe.” (John 20:24-29). What more can *we* say to Jesus, than “My Lord and my God!”

## QUESTIONS

1. Why did Jesus need to be born in Bethlehem? What circumstances ensured that Jesus was born

in Bethlehem and not in His parents’ home town of Nazareth?

2. How was Jesus born as both the Son of God and the Son of Man?
3. Why didn’t Jesus just come as an angel, rather than a man?
4. How does Jesus’ *humanity* help us? How does His *deity* help us?
5. Why did Jesus call Himself by God’s name (“I AM”, or YHWH)? What does this imply?
6. “Christ” is from the Greek word (*Christos*) meaning “Anointed One”. “Messiah” is the Hebrew word which means the same, but is often thought of as Jesus’ surname or title. Why is it probably more helpful to use “Messiah” rather than “Christ”?

## Prayer Suggestions

### THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

We all have different needs, but those of us who are not disabled and do not have special needs, often don’t think about those who do, or pray especially for them. **Elevate Christian Disability Trust** (formerly called Christian Ministries with Disabled) is one Christian organisation who not only thinks about and prays for those with special needs, but gets actively involved in helping them. Last year they celebrated 40 years of ministry – empowering people with disabilities to live their lives to their full potential – physically, mentally, socially and spiritually. These are exactly the people Jesus ministered to while He was here on earth – those with physical sicknesses, mental issues, people who did not fit easily into the normal social life of society, and those with deep spiritual needs. Elevate Christian Disability Trust is an inter-church ministry, based in Auckland, with 16 branches throughout New Zealand. Their vision is to see all people, especially people with a disability, living out their full potential in Jesus Christ, through the local church and community. Their mission is to lift up the Lord Jesus and share the Hope of the Gospel; to elevate and help people with disabilities to have the voice and resources to fully engage with their community, and to reach their potential. They also seek to elevate an awareness of the needs of people with disabilities for acceptance and discipleship in the Body of Christ, through training, resourcing and mobilizing churches throughout the nation. For further information see [www.elevatecdt.org.nz](http://www.elevatecdt.org.nz) or email [info@elevatecdt.org.nz](mailto:info@elevatecdt.org.nz)

#### Please pray for:

- All people in our society who have special needs, physically, mentally, socially and spiritually.
- The love and power of God to touch them and minister to those needs.
- Their family members as they seek to help their loved ones, in spite of the extra care and attention that may

involve; may God give them extra strength and gifts to help; and may they never give up.

- The ministry of Elevate Christian Disability Trust as they seek to minister into the lives of these people and encourage others to accept, and become involved with, and care for those with special needs.
- Churches to do all they can to minister to those with disabilities, so that they can become fully involved with all that the church is doing.
- Financial needs to be fully provided so that lack of finance does not hinder the work that can be done.
- **Praise God** for all the good things He has done, and is doing, in your life!

### YOUNG PEOPLE

As the new school year, and university year, begins, let us pray for all young people in our country. The following prayer points (slightly adapted) have been suggested in the Gore, Southland “*By Prayer*” monthly prayer letter. Please pray for:

#### Principals, staff, Boards of Trustees, and Parent-Teacher Associations

Pray for them to have an awareness of the Lord’s presence, guidance and wisdom.

#### Students – both those who are new and those who are returning

Pray for a sense of peace at this sometimes unsettling time; that God will calm any stormy feelings inside them and give them His peace.

#### School leavers

Pray for those who have now finished school, especially those who are heading away from home to study or work.

Pray that they will establish strong, new, healthy relationships and be kept safe; and, for those who are Christians, that they will find a spiritual home where they will grow in the ways of the Lord.

## Youth groups, Sunday Schools, and other young people's programs

Pray that as these programs start up for this year, that the leaders will have a new sense of purpose and enthusiasm.

Pray that the young people will have the courage to take a step closer to God, or take the life-changing step to follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

Pray that young people will have the courage to invite their friends, including those who are not yet Christians, to these groups and programs.

## Bible in Schools

Pray for the Bible in Schools teachers and organisers as they prepare for the year. Pray that they will have a renewed sense of passion for the teaching they are doing.

Pray that the children in the classes will be receptive to the message that they hear, and the seeds sown will take root and produce good fruit.

Pray that the principals and school staff and parents will welcome the program, and that they too will hear or see something that sparks a journey in them to knowing Christ.

## Children's camps and outreaches

Give thanks to God for the successful children's camps and outreaches over the Christmas/New Year holidays.

Pray that those who became Christians at camps will continue to walk with God, and that He will place Christian friends, adults, and leaders to guide and help them grow.

**Pray** for the salvation of the young people in your district.

**Pray** that they will be (or become) strong, prayerful, Christian witnesses to reach their own families and generation with the Gospel.

## FAMILIES

In the beginning, God gave children *parents*, not governments or schools! Conversely, God gave parents *children*, and the responsibility of teaching them by word and by example; loving them, caring for them, protecting them, and leading them to know the Lord and to follow in His ways. There is nothing inherently wrong with governments or schools, of course, but they should supplement what parents do and teach their children, and not take over parents' responsibilities to nurture, love and train their children in the right ways.

Over the last few weeks there has been special prayer for families, and this month there will be special seasons of prayer for the unborn child. Tragically, since the abortion Act was passed by the New Zealand Government in 1977, up until the end of 2015 (the latest available data) a total of over 480,000 babies have been aborted in New Zealand – that is 11% of our country's present population. There has already been much prayer over this issue, and there has been a decrease in

the number and rates of abortion over the last 12 years. In 2003 there were 18,511 abortions – 1 abortion for every 3.0 live births (that is, 25% of pregnancies were aborted); in 2015 there were 13,155 abortions – 1 for every 4.6 live births (that is, 18% of pregnancies were aborted). But this still requires much prayer!

**Family Life International** is calling for prayer for 40 Days for Life, from 1 March to 9 April. Please see their website for further details: [www.fli.org.nz/prolifeevents](http://www.fli.org.nz/prolifeevents)

**Stand in the Gap**, is another group calling for people to pray one day each month, over a 40 week period, from March to November. If you would like to take part in this, please email Sue Rowe at [roy.sue.rowe@clear.net.nz](mailto:roy.sue.rowe@clear.net.nz)

## PLEASE PRAY:

- For families – fathers, mothers, and children. For strong, united, loving, supportive families.
- That children will be taught right ways, in their families, and that schools and government will support good parenting in every way possible.
- That our society will adopt healthy and moral ways of relationships, and that immorality will decline, rather than get worse and worse.
- For women who are pregnant, especially those facing difficult decisions about their pregnancy.
- That the number and rates of abortion will rapidly decline, and that women will find support to carry on with their pregnancy whenever possible.
- For Family Life International, and Stand in the Gap – for their prayer, and other, initiatives.

## A PRAYER (Psalm 139:23-24)

Search me, O God, and know my heart. Test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the everlasting Way.

Lord, I commit this day to You.

Please show me how to live today so that my life is pleasing to You, and a blessing to other people. Please help me to love You with all my heart and soul, mind and strength. Help me to obey You in all things.

Please help me to love others as I love myself – to do for them what I would like them to do for me – and that includes everything that You want me to do for them.

Please wash me clean from all sin – body, soul and spirit – so that I love You, and I love others, out of a life that has been washed clean by the blood of Jesus; and everything that flows from my life comes from pure motives – so that my thoughts, my words and actions are pleasing to You.

In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen!

[Read Mark 12:28-31; Matthew 7:12; Acts 20:35; 1 Corinthians 10:31]

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**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](http://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](http://www.pray-for-the-nation.org/monthly-magazines.php)