



Pray for the Nation ~ INOI MO TE MOTU

Intercessors for New Zealand

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The LORD said, "If My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven, and I will forgive their sin, and heal their land." (2 Chronicles 7:14)

OCTOBER 2018

Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. (Psalm 33:12)
Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. (Proverbs 14:34)
Pray in the Spirit at all times, in every prayer and supplication. (Ephesians 6:18)

Pillars of Society: Prayer Points

Over the past 5 months (May to September) the Bible Studies on pages 3 and 4 of these *Prayer Letters* have centred on **Pillars of Society** – major areas which help to support a good and healthy society.

This month we suggest ways in which you can pray for some of these Pillars. If you have not already seen these Bible Studies, they can be seen in the *Prayer Letters* on our website: <https://www.pray-for-the-nation.org/monthly-magazines.php>

The Lord (June 2018 *Prayer Letter*)

- Please pray that the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, will be honoured in our land. His Name is above every Name – may it be so in practice too!
- Pray that people will realise the sacredness of His Name and will not blaspheme.
- Pray that Christians will exalt the Lord and lift His Name high.
- Pray that Kings and Queens, Presidents and Prime Ministers will come to recognise Jesus' supreme authority, His Royalty and His ultimate rule over all the kingdoms of the earth.
- Pray that people will come to see that all true authority and sovereignty are derived from Him, and that the further we depart from Him and His ways, the greater the detriment to our society.

The Family (July 2018 *Prayer Letter*)

- Please pray for families throughout our country – that the very best role models for good families will be upheld and encouraged.
- Pray for all those people who suffer in various ways from ungodly relationships and dysfunctional families.
- Pray that all forms of immorality, illicit drug use and violence, all of which are so destructive to the family, will decline and people will turn away from these evils.

- Pray that Government, and society as a whole, will do everything possible to encourage and support good, healthy marriages and families.
- Pray against the many destructive influences on families, which are in our land today.

The Church (August 2018 *Prayer Letter*)

- Pray that the Church will be the power and influence in society that God desires it to be.
- Pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to be manifest through God's leading of the Church, and our obedience to the Lord.
- Pray that our lives will reflect the teaching of the Scriptures so that we demonstrate what we believe, and therefore have a profound influence on the society around us.
- Pray that people will see the blessing which the Church brings to society, and will more and more embrace Christ and His ways.
- Pray that God will raise up an army of intercessors in our country.
- Pray that intercessors will keep their eyes on the Lord; pray as the Holy Spirit leads; stand strong in His strength and wisdom; and not try to stand or pray in their own strength.
- Pray that our prayers will be fervent, effective and will prevail, supporting and uplifting all that which is good.

Authority (September 2018 *Prayer Letter*)

Please pray regarding **Authority in general:**

- For Godly leadership in our nation, who will have God's authority and blessing on them.
- That people will recognise the need to obey God rather than people, when these are in conflict.
- That Christians will be exemplary in upholding and obeying that which is good and right.
- That people will encourage their leaders to uphold what is righteous (Proverbs 29:2).
- That people will recognise that God's ways are right, and that obedience to them will bring the greatest blessing to any country.
- "First of all, I urge that ... intercessions ... be made for ... all who are in authority, so that we may lead quiet and peaceful lives with all Godliness and dignity" (1 Timothy 2:1-2). Pray for this to occur!

Please pray regarding **Authority of Government:**

- Those who are over us, in positions of leadership and Government: Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Party Leaders, Cabinet Ministers, all other Members of Parliament – and the advice they are given by Government Departments.
- That God will raise up good and righteous leaders who will fulfil His purposes for our country.
- That bad leadership will be changed or removed.
- That Christians will pray for, and support, their leaders in everything good that they seek to do.
- That Christians will be given wisdom and authority in speaking against those things which are wrong.
- That Christians will be good, law-abiding citizens who do not resist the right use of authority.

Righteousness (October 2018 Prayer Letter)

Please pray:

- That Christians will see the importance of living righteous lives – not “self-righteous” but living by the power of God and exhibiting Godly Christian character and witness.
- That churches will see the importance of teaching and upholding righteousness before their people as the way which is pleasing to God, which brings blessing to the people, and is a powerful witness in the community.
- That the laws of our country will be righteous laws, in accordance with God’s principles, not man’s. That people will reject unrighteousness, and that unrighteous laws will be overturned.
- That those things which are good and right and proper in God’s eyes will be upheld as the standards in our communities and that unrighteousness will be dealt with.

THE WORLD TODAY

Jesus said, *“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that whoever believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal (everlasting) life.”* John 3:16

Jesus said, *“The thief comes only to steal and to kill and to destroy, but I have come so that you may have life and have it abundantly (in all its fulness)”*. John 10:10

Most of us, who read this *Prayer Letter*, live in part of the world that is incredibly blessed compared to a very large part of the world where people suffer in many ways.

• Natural disasters

There are many natural disasters occurring throughout the world in these days. Of course, they have occurred throughout history, but with the population of the world today (7.5 billion people) and the extensive reporting of news around the world, we are much more aware of this. At present there are climate extremes, major fires, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, and droughts.

• Poverty and starvation

In some parts of the world there are major areas of starvation. Despite all the food the world produces, and other necessities for living a reasonable life, there are millions of people on the brink of starvation and living in such poverty that it is hard for most of us to imagine.

• Serious health conditions

Serious health conditions, disease, life-crippling injuries and lack of reasonably basic medical and health care, are other causes of many people’s suffering and death.

• Corrupt political situations

Many of the above situations are, to a reasonable extent at least, due to their political situations – corruption, in-fighting, bad leadership, and so on. With such governments it is not surprising that their people suffer major consequences.

• Warfare and other violence

Both internal violence in its many forms, plus warfare with other countries and between factions within the country (civil war) result in huge numbers of innocent people suffering and dying. Homes are destroyed, populations divided and decimated, normal society is incredibly disrupted, apart from thousands of deaths, people being incapacitated for life, and other life-threatening injuries.

• Fear of their future

Fear, and with it a complete sense of hopelessness, pervades many people in the above situations. Babies are born into, and people live in, a world where there is no real future – poverty, lack of protection, no education, no work – just fear for their basic living and their lives.

• Ignorance of the Gospel, the one true God, and His salvation

While there may be a billion people who have heard the Gospel and acknowledge some form of allegiance to the Christian faith, there may be still 6,500,000,000 people for whom there is no hope of salvation yet. They have either not heard the Gospel, or have heard and rejected it, or are in bondage to a religion which has no hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

Please pray through each of the above 7 situations.

Over 2000 years after Jesus came into this world, there is still so much that has yet to be done in order for the world to see an acknowledge what Jesus has done for the world He so loves. The abundant life He promised for His true followers has yet to come for the billions of people who have not yet heard or believed and found His salvation.

Praise God, our hope is in Him, through whom we have eternal life.

Pray that His Good News will rapidly spread throughout the world to those who have yet to come to Him for their salvation.



Pillars of Society

5. THE 5th PILLAR:

RIGHTEOUSNESS

The Bible has a lot to say about righteousness. In fact, the words “righteous”, “righteousness” and “upright” occur about 540 times in the Bible, so they are obviously very important words, and very important with regard to our behaviour!

Righteousness is a quality of the life of a righteous person. It involves right living – “right”, not by human standards, but by **God’s** standards. It is God Who determines what is right and what is wrong; what is righteous and what is unrighteous. On the whole, the laws of many nations roughly reflect what is good and right as God defines these words.

Righteousness should be very evident in both the Church as a whole, and in individual Christians’ lives. Of course, we do not always do what is right – because we all sin at times, but churches should be unique communities of people who seek to live by God’s righteous standards and seek to deal with sin quickly when it does occur. While the Bible says that “There is no-one that is righteous, no, not one” (Psalm 14:1-3; Romans 3:10), nevertheless this is the life which every Christian should be seeking to live, as disciples (followers) of Jesus Christ. Our righteousness is in Christ (Philippians 3:9) and as we live His way, and repent of all unrighteousness, we can stand before God as righteous through Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross – our Substitute and our example!

The book of Romans

Paul, in Romans, talks a lot about righteousness and unrighteousness:

- Righteousness comes from God (1:1-17)
- Unrighteousness in all humanity (1:18 – 3:20)
- Righteousness is imputed to us – justification (3:21 – 5:21)

- Righteousness is imparted to us – our sanctification (6:1 – 8:39)
- Righteousness vindicated (9:1 – 11:36)
- Righteousness practiced (12:1 – 15:13)

Righteousness, and its blessings, not only apply to individuals, but can also affect communities, cities and nations.

Proverbs 14:34 says, *“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach [shameful] to any people.”* Just as a person will be blessed by obedience to God, so too a nation will know blessing to the degree to which its people seek to live rightly, and the laws of the land uphold righteous ways. God knows what is best for us; righteous ways are both good for us and also pleasing to Him. God’s blessing and favour are upon those who live righteously.

Proverbs 11:10-11 says, *“When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; and when the wicked perish, there is jubilation. A city is exalted by the blessing of the upright, but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.”*

Proverbs 28:12, 28 say, *“When the righteous triumph, there is great glory; but when the wicked prevail, people go into hiding; ... when the wicked perish, the righteous increase.”*

Proverbs 29: 2, 16 say, *“When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked rule, the people groan. ... When the wicked are in authority, transgression increases, but the righteous will look upon their downfall.”*

The above verses all show the importance of righteousness in a city or land. This is why prayer, and Godly example, are so important for our nation.

What is right and righteous?

The whole Bible is about what is right (righteous) and what is wrong (unrighteous). God created Adam and Eve as perfect in His eyes. But they disobeyed Him and were cast out of the Garden of Eden. Their first child, Cain, killed his brother Abel. And so, through the rest of the Bible, we read of good and evil – the blessings of God coming on those who were righteous (like Abraham), and judgement coming on people, cities and nations which rebelled against God (like Sodom and Gomorrah).

Again, throughout the whole Bible God makes His ways known to people. Some of these passages include:

Galatians 5:16-26 which compares the works of the flesh (ungodliness) with the fruit of the Spirit.

Matthew chapters 5-7. The Sermon on the Mount, including the nine Beatitudes and their blessings (5:3-12).

Philippians 4:8-9, “Whatever is true, honourable, just, pure, pleasing [to God], and commendable – if there is any excellence and anything worthy of praise – think about these things!”

Jesus summed up the whole Law and the prophets in these words: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, and with all your strength; and you shall love your neighbour [other people] as you love yourself.” (Mark 12:30-31)

Righteousness is doing these things, and it brings blessing to the righteous.

Unrighteousness is rebelling against these things, and it brings judgement. But, praise God, there is forgiveness to a person or a nation which repents, asks God’s forgiveness, and turns from its wicked ways. (2 Chronicles 7:14)

What does upright mean?

Upright is another word for righteous, usually used in modern translations of the Bible. An upright person lives their life the right way up! That is, they live as God would have them live – looking up to Him and obeying what He says.

What does holiness mean?

God said, “Be holy, for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:15-16). Holiness is being set apart from unrighteousness and being declared “holy” by a holy God. This comes by means of the cleansing of Jesus’ blood, the determination to follow Him and His ways, and by the power of His Spirit.

Purity is the life we seek to live in obedience to the Lord – a life which is pure, Godly and blessed!

QUESTIONS

1. Who defines what is “right” and “righteous”?
2. What results can we expect if we seek to always live as God wants us to live?
3. Can cities of nations be “righteous”? Why or why not?
4. What blessings come to a city or nation which has righteous leaders and rulers?
5. What are some examples in the Bible of God’s judgement on wickedness in society, and God’s blessing when people are obedient to Him?
6. What does **Psalm 15** say about righteousness?
7. What do the following verses say about righteousness:

Psalms 85:10-13; 89:14; 97:2

Jeremiah 23:5-6

Hebrews 1:9

1 Peter 3:12

2 Peter 3:11-13

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