



## 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)

DECEMBER 2018

Seek the peace of the city to which I have carried you away to be captives, and pray to the Lord for it, for in its peace you shall have your peace. (Jeremiah 29:7)

### Cities & Nations

When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; and when the wicked perish, there is jubilation [great rejoicing]. By the blessing of the upright, a city is exalted, but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked. Where there is no guidance, a nation falls, but in the abundance of [wise, righteous] counsellors there is safety. Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach [shameful] to any people. (Proverbs 11:10, 11, 14; 14:34)

#### CITIES AND NATIONS

The Israelites, especially when they were in captivity, were reminded to pray for the city in which they dwelt, and for their homeland (Israel) and its capital (Jerusalem). In **Jeremiah 29:1-15**, we read, "Thus says the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel ... 'Seek the welfare of the city (Babylon) where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. ... Surely, I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. When you call upon Me and come and pray to Me, I will hear you. When you search for Me, you will find Me. If you seek Me with all your heart, I will let you find Me, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes ...'."

**Also read** 2 Chronicles 6:34-40; 7:12-15 and what Paul says to the early Church in 1 Timothy 2:1-4.

#### Pray therefore:

- **For the city or town** in which you live; for its governing authorities; for wise decisions to be made; for the righteous to have a good

influence over the area, and for ungodliness to be put down.

- **For the nation** in which you live; for its government and other authorities in the land; for the upholding of good and righteous laws and ways to be implemented; and for a nation which will repent of its evil ways, and seek the LORD God for His forgiveness and salvation.
- **That Christians will set a Godly standard** – God-fearing and righteous; that we will humble ourselves and pray, seek God's face and turn from anything which is displeasing to God who we worship and should seek to obey.
- **That we might be an exemplary nation** and a witness to other countries of what God can and will do if we will seek Him and repent (turn from evil ways).
- **For God's power and glory** to be seen in our land, throughout its town and cities, as well as rural areas; that we may be a nation which is pleasing to God and be blessed as a people.

#### CITY-BY-CITY

Colin Shaw is one New Zealander who has been involved for quite some time in Prayer Summits of Christian leaders, encouraging prayer for our cities, city-by-city. He has written about what is happening in our cities, and challenges Christians to pray for their cities and towns.

**Please pray** for Colin and this ministry throughout New Zealand:

- One of the websites from which information can be seen is the NZ Christian Network site: <https://nzchristiannetwork.org.nz/prayer-cities-and-prayer-summits> Look at the whole page on this site as there is further information below the top article Colin has written.
- Colin has also produced an e-book which can be seen on the website:

[https://issuu.com/svartcom/docs/city\\_by\\_city\\_e\\_book\\_18\\_december\\_201](https://issuu.com/svartcom/docs/city_by_city_e_book_18_december_201) (Note that there is other material on this page, some of which is not related to Colin's e-book!)

*There is much for prayer in the above two webpages!*

## **PRAYING FOR THE WELFARE OF OUR SOCIETY**

**Jeremiah 29:7; 38:4; Nehemiah 1:2-4; 2:10**

- Pray for the welfare of the town, city or district in which you live.
- Pray for the welfare of all New Zealand's citizens and visitors.
- Pray especially for those who are disadvantaged by poverty, sickness, disability, poor upbringing, unemployment, etc.
- Our welfare includes body, soul and spirit. Pray for the spiritual welfare, through salvation, of those people who do not yet know the Lord.
- Pray for God's protection over us, morally, spiritually, from "natural" disasters, and attacks of the enemy (both spiritually and physically).
- Let us also remember to give thanks for, and pray for, all those people who risk their lives for the welfare of people in need: for those people associated with the Fire, Ambulance and Police services, Civil Defence and other rescue workers such as lifeguards, search and rescue, etc.

## **PRAYER FOR OUR GOVERNMENT**

Changes to the prayer prayed in Parliament by the Speaker, every day which Parliament sits.

Recently there has been a gathering at Parliament asking for the prayer which is prayed daily when Parliament is sitting, to be changed back to what it was before the end of last year, when it was changed to omit the words "through Jesus Christ our Lord". It is, of course, debatable as to whether this prayer has any relevance to the large majority of MPs who do not follow the Lord Jesus Christ, or believe in Him. However, *all Christians can pray this prayer for our MPs:*

### **Christians' prayer for Parliament and all Members of Parliament**

"Almighty God, humbly acknowledging our [their] need for Thy guidance in all things, and laying aside all private and personal interests, we beseech Thee to grant that we [they] may

conduct the affairs of this House and of our country to the glory of Thy holy name, the maintenance of true religion and justice, the honour of the Queen, and the public welfare, peace, and tranquillity of New Zealand, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

## **UNITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST**

Jesus' prayer in **John 17** shows His heart, and His Father's heart, for unity in His Body, the Church, the Bride of Christ. This chapter shows Jesus' desire for people's salvation and for their unity, "so that they [we] may have My [Jesus'] joy made complete in themselves."

*If Jesus, just before His death for us, prayed this prayer for us, how much more should we also be praying this prayer and praying along these lines!*

### **Pray, as Jesus prayed:**

- That we will glorify God's Son through our worship, witness and obedience.
- That we will use every opportunity that God gives us, to share with people the Gospel and the Word of God, so that they too will share eternal life with other believers.
- For God's protection, and that we will be one, as the Father and the Son are one.
- That all Christians will be full of God's joy, in spite of opposition from the world and the evil one.
- That we will be sanctified [set apart, made holy, separated from worldliness and evil] through God's Word of truth.
- That all Christians will be one – just as the Father is in Jesus and Jesus is in Him – that we also will be completely one in the Lord!
- That the world will know that the Father has sent the Son, and the Son loves them as the Father loves His Son (John 3:16; 15:13)
- That we will be where Jesus is, so that we can see His glory.
- That the love with which the Father has loved the Son will be in us, and Jesus will dwell in us!

These are **amazing** words and profound thoughts – but this is how Jesus prayed for us and the world, and we need to pray this too!

This is what we should strive for! Even if it is much harder to achieve – and even seems impossible – this is what Jesus prayed for, and we need to pray as He prayed.



## Pillars of Society

### 7. THE 7th PILLAR: JUSTICE

“I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. So help me God.”

The above used to be the oath that a person would swear in court before giving evidence in a court case. It relies on the assumptions that:

- I know the truth.
- I know the whole truth.
- I will not say anything which is untrue.

Essentially, justice depends on the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth – plus a fair, discerning jury, and a wise and just judge.

Jesus said, “Do not judge by *appearances*, but judge with right judgement.” (John 7:24). Discernment is required.

Other important factors, in order for justice to be done, is that the decision made is fair to the victim; and that the punishment is reasonable and fair, and seeks to encourage the offender to not commit such an offence again.

Justice and penalties for wrong-doing, are not just to appease the victim and punish the guilty but to protect the innocent and help reform the guilty (dissuade them from repeating the offence). What can we do to help the person who has been wronged? What can we do to help the offender see the error of their ways and not repeat the offence?

These, then, are foundations of a just (righteous) society.

God is a just Judge. He, and He alone, knows the Truth, and the whole Truth. He also knows what is error. Hence, His judgements are just.

He also understands the suffering of those who are victims, and He knows the best way for the

guilty offender to be restored – through repentance, confession of wrong-doing, and a determination (with God’s help) not to repeat what was done wrong.

Jesus came into the world for these very things. He came to show us what is right and true. He came to pay the penalty for our offences. The Holy Spirit came to “convict us of sin, righteousness and judgement” (John 16:8). Jesus also sent the Holy Spirit to give us the power to live a Godly and righteous life, and so bear witness to the fruitfulness of faith in Him.

Jesus didn’t come into the world to condemn the world, but to bring salvation from condemnation. We all deserve condemnation because we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). The judgement for our sins is separation from a holy and just God. But Jesus came to pay the penalty for our sins so that we are reconciled to God and can spend eternity with God, rather than eternal separation from Him.

#### Justice in society

So, justice and truth in our society are very closely linked, both in general and also in Law.

Justice in society means doing what is right (in God’s eyes), being fair, impartial (not biased or prejudiced), and supportive of all that is good and beneficial. ‘Prejudice’ means ‘pre-justice’ – that is, making a decision before we know all the facts – assuming a person or group of people are wrong, without knowing the whole truth.

Justice also implies that we are **just**, for how can we judge someone for the “speck in their eye” when we have a “log in our own eye”? (Matthew 7:1-5). We all make judgements every day, but do we “examine our own hearts” before we make such judgements and decisions based on those judgements?

Paul, writing to the Christians in Ephesus, writes of the 'Armour of God' and the 'Weapons of our Warfare' against the attacks of the evil one (Ephesians 6:10-18). One of the pieces of our armour – part of our defence against the deceptions and temptations of Satan – is for us to wear the 'belt (girdle) of truth'. The belt stops us from being tripped up and falling because of the clothing we wear.

### For further study

The words *justice*, *judge* or *judgement*, occur in 253 verses of the Bible, especially in the books of Psalms and Proverbs. Note that the words "just" and "justice" are often translated "righteous" (right living or upright), and "righteousness", respectively.

Some of the Scriptures relating to these topics, for further reference and study are:

Psalm 72:1-2; 89:14; Proverbs 2:8-9; 16:10; 18:5; 19:28; 29:4, 14; Isaiah 58:6; Micah 6:8.

## QUESTIONS

1. In what ways are justice and truth related?
2. How do we discern between what is true and what is false?
3. What things can hinder justice from being done?
4. How does should justice relate to the victim, and also to the offender.?
5. What are some common prejudices in our society today?

6. Are there injustices in the Church today? If so, what are some of them?
7. What are the key points in the verses given in the section '**For further study**'?

## PRAYER REGARDING JUSTICE AND TRUTH

### Please pray for:

- **Justice in our land.** This begins with our Members of Parliament and those who draft and write our laws (the "lawmakers") – please pray for them and for laws which are just and right.
- **Justice in the courts.** Pray for judges and juries who must make decisions based on what they hear. Pray that justice will be done – that the innocent will be found to be innocent and the guilty will be found to be guilty. Pray for just and wise decisions to be made in the sentencing of those who are guilty.
- **Justice for the poor** and those who are wrongfully discriminated against in our society.
- **Justice in the workplace**, for both employers and employees.
- **Justice in society**, that there will not be unfair discrimination and prejudice, for example, prejudice based on race. *Note:* This does not mean that we don't discriminate between good and evil! Some people who persistently do what is wrong may well feel discriminated against!
- **Justice in the home and family.**

**PLEASE NOTE:** We are not planning to send out a *Prayer Letter* for January.

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

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