



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)

FEBRUARY 2019

Jesus' last words on earth: "All authority in Heaven and on earth has been given to Me. **GO**, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." "You are witnesses to these things. I am sending upon you what My Father promised; so stay here in the city [Jerusalem] until you have been clothed with power from on High." "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 24:48-49; Acts 1:8)

Movement Day 2019

O give thanks to the Lord for He is good; for His steadfast love endures forever! (Jeremiah 33:10-11 and 41 other verses in the Bible!)

The **New Zealand Christian Network** – an organisation linking Christians, churches and Christian organisations; and **City by City** which encourages and supports church unity in cities, towns and regions throughout Aotearoa New Zealand – are part of **Movement Day 2019**. What is this "day"? Movement Day is an opportunity for Christians from around the nation to join together to celebrate stories of unity, prayer and transformation in cities, towns and regions across the country. Keynote speakers include Seth Fawcett (Hope Centre, Lower Hutt) and Roger Sutton (Gather Global, UK).

The dates for this gathering are ...

Tuesday 14 to Wednesday 15 May

Please pray for this conference; for those who will be speaking; and for the encouragement of God's people to *Pray for the Nation*, its cities and towns. New Zealand needs prayer, God's answers, and the joys of sharing what God is doing in our country. The media often report the 'bad' news – come and be encouraged by the Good News!

For further information see:

<https://nzchristiannetwork.org.nz/events/movement-day-new-zealand/> and
<https://citybycity.co.nz> and www.movementday.com

Praise God for ...

Praise God for all the good things happening in our land:

- For each and every person who has heard the Gospel, including those who have heard the Gospel for the first time, over the past year or so.
- For every person who has been born again recently.

- For every person who, having fallen away from the Lord, has repented and turned back to Him.
- For God's grace, mercy and forgiveness to all of us – the 'worst sinners' and the 'best sinners'!
- For all churches where the Word of God and His ways are being taught and encouraged.
- For every Christian, church and Christian organisation where the seeds of the Gospel are being sown, watered by prayer and nurtured towards maturity.
- For church growth in many churches as they reach out into the harvest fields.
- For good things which are happening in your city or town, and throughout our country, in response to the prayers, intercessions, and faithful witness by word and by deed of God's people.
- **Jeremiah 33:10-11** The people complained that the land was waste, without people or animals, and the streets were desolate, but the LORD said, "There shall once more be heard the voice of laughter and the voice of gladness, the voice of the Bridegroom and the voice of the Bride; the voices of those who sing as they bring offerings of thanks to the LORD: 'Give thanks to the LORD of hosts, for the LORD is good, for His steadfast love endures forever!' " Pray that this will happen throughout Aotearoa New Zealand, too!

GO ... !

At the beginning of this new year, it is fitting that we reflect on Jesus' last words to His followers, which are both a climax to all His teaching, and His final command – to go into all the world, and preach and teach the good news (Gospel) of salvation through His life, death, resurrection and ascension.

He reminded them of His authority, and of the Holy Spirit Who was promised by the Father, and Who was to come upon them with supernatural power to go out in His name and bring salvation to the Jews – locally in Jerusalem and in the whole region of Judea; to the Gentiles in neighbouring Samaria; and to us (and others) – to the ends of the earth.

Let us pray for our obedience to these words, as:

- **Individual Christians** – every believer, every follower (disciple) of Jesus, should be looking for opportunities to share the good news with people God leads us to share with, as well as people who God brings to us. We must never be afraid of sharing the Good News of salvation – we need to “rekindle the gift of God that is within us ... for God did not give us a Spirit of fear, but of power [the power of the Holy Spirit], and of love [God’s love], and of self-discipline.” (2 Timothy 1:6-7)
- **The Church and churches** – the whole universal Church is called to obey, teach and encourage their people to follow Jesus, His ways, and His words (some of which are shared above in this *Update*). As part of this, local churches should be reaching out to their city (‘Jerusalem’) and their region (‘Judea’ and ‘Samaria’).
- **Christian organisations** – reaching out to the nation. There are many Christian organisations in the country, each of them reaching out in many different ways, but which should always have a vision towards sharing the Gospel with those they minister to, even if their organisation is not overtly to lead people to Christ. Whatever our hands find to do, we should do it with all our might – to the glory of God.
- **World evangelistic organisations** – reaching out to the billions of people around the world who are, at this time, unsaved.

All the above need our prayers and support: Ourselves; Christians we know; the church we are part of; Christian organisations and especially those with a direct evangelistic focus; and missions which reach out to other nations especially the unreached people and those who do not yet have God’s Word in their language or people to teach them the ways of the Lord.

Pray for a worldwide outpouring of the Holy Spirit, many hundreds of thousands of people saved, and revival in the Church of Jesus Christ!

PRAYING THROUGH THE LIFESPAN

Speaking to the Lord, King David said, “In Your book were written all the days that were formed for me, before any of them existed. How weighty to me are Your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!” (Psalm 139:16-17)

In **Psalm 139**, David reflects on his life (and the lives of us all) throughout our lifespan, especially who the LORD is and how He is involved in our lives. He speaks of God’s *omniscience* – He knows all things, even the smallest details about us and our lives (v. 1-6). His *omnipresence* – He is everywhere; we can’t hide from Him! (v. 7-12). His *omnipotence* – He has all power – nothing is too hard for Him (v. 13-18). His *holiness* – He is the only one who is perfect, but He tells us that we need to become like Him – holy through our repentance, becoming clean through Jesus’ blood, and the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives (v.19-24).

These things can be either scary or wonderful, depending on how people see them. Scary because no-one cannot hide from God and He knows all about us. Wonderful because no matter how lonely or isolated a person may feel; how needy they may be; how weak they are – the all-knowing, all-wise, all-powerful, and supremely-loving God is there! People always need to call on Him, for all things, for all our needs. “Search me, O God and know my heart. Test me and know my thoughts [how I feel and what I am thinking]. See if there is any wickedness in me – and lead me in Your everlasting, eternal way!” (v. 23-24)

These truths – wonderful as they are – apply not only to Christians; they apply to every single person, whether they believe in the LORD and whether they will call on Him, or not.

Let us “pray through the lifespan” of people, as *the Lord leads you*.

- **BIRTH** Some couples desperately want children but don’t have them; some don’t want children but a child is conceived; some babies are aborted; some babies are left with only one parent to look after them; some babies are blessed with wonderful (though human!) parents.
- **FAMILIES** For some, families are a joy; for some they are extremely stressful (especially with only one parent to care); some face financial or other hardships; some families are very divided; some have disabled children; involve child abuse, rebellious children, etc.
- **YOUNG PEOPLE** This can be a tumultuous time of life – a time of so many changes – physically, mentally, sexually, new temptations, uncertainty, addictions, fears of becoming more and more independent and the choices that need to be made.
- **ADULTS** Adults face the needs and demands of their growing children; the difficulties of guiding them in right ways; their children leaving home, or having undesirable friends. Adults have their own needs too – stress, the prospect of their marriage breaking up, needs for work and income.
- **ELDERLY** The elderly often face health problems, loneliness (especially when they lose their spouse), the uncertainty of their future and how to provide for it.

At every point in life people need help, support, encouragement, etc. Above all, if people are not already believers and followers of the LORD, they need salvation and **His** help.

Pray that Christians will pray for people in all these stages of life, and will do what they can to help others.



Pillars of Society

8. THE 8th PILLAR: EDUCATION

Education is a very powerful influence on people's lives, especially young people. Proverbs 22:6 says, "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it."

Today, our secular world is quite often at variance with godly principles. For example, Philippians 4:8-9 encourages us to think about, learn and practice those things which are true, honourable, just, pure, pleasing [to God], commendable, excellent and worthy of praise – things which build up society and are pleasing to God. How far we have fallen from these principles for living!

WAYS OF LEARNING

There are a number of ways in which people learn. Some of these are subtle ways that we are not particularly conscious of; others are obvious and/or chosen ways. For example:

Home and family: The earliest, and possibly the most powerful, ways are through the home (or homes) and family (or families) that we are raised in. There are families in which children are raised by their two parents in a loving home in which they are taught good ways of living. There are sole-parent families, adopted families, families in which there is abuse between parents or between parents and children, and many other ways of family living – some desirable, some less desirable, and others that are far from desirable.

Schooling: Similarly, schooling can have a major influence on the lives of children. What children are taught; the examples given by teachers; and the influence of other children, have life-forming influences on how children are raised and on their ways of living.

Society as a whole: Apart from family and schools, another major way in which people learn or live is by what they see, and the influences and pressures of the society in which they live – whether good or bad. The pressures to conform with the norms of society (good or bad), the influences of friends, and so on, have

a major impact on the choices we make and how we live.

The media: People spend a huge amount of time learning from the media they see. Online media, television, films, videos, radio, as well as books and magazines, have an influence on our thinking and consequently the lifestyle we choose (or which develops as a result of what we see and hear).

Experience: Experience can be a great blessing or a hard teacher. Some experiences have a life-changing impact on us, for better or for worse. Child abuse, violence, extreme hatred, terror, malicious slander, deception, etc., on the one hand; and sacrificial support and love, great examples of how we should live, generosity, and so on, on the other hand, are all things which we may experience at any age. These can profoundly affect the way we think and behave, or cause life-long hurts and changes to the way we feel about ourselves, think about and treat others, and so on.

The ideal

"Train up young people (say, below 20 years of age) in the ways they should go ...". Probably the most important stage in a person's life, in terms of lifestyle, character changes and the setting of lifestyle behaviours, is in their first 20 years. Their upbringing as infants and children, and the strong influences on them in their teenage years, tend to set lifelong patterns of behaviour.

The Bible teaches us that the ideal is for:

- Born again, Godly, loving and caring Christian parents who will lead their children by example and by teaching. Teaching must be backed up by Godly example, otherwise it becomes hypocritical – and children will recognise this! Children need to be taught the Word of God and its wisdom and teachings – especially (but not only) the New Testament. Spiritual, moral and social teaching and example, need to be given. They also need to be taught and shown the importance of Christian fellowship – church.

- As they grow up to be adolescents, the importance of not only family, but also friends, becomes extremely important. Children need to learn to discern what is good and what is evil; and to choose what is good, and resist and turn from evil. Major areas of growth will include spiritually (relationship with God), morally (including sexually), social behaviour, mentally (attitudes, which lead to actions).
- Is all this too late? The above may be 'ideal' but it is impossible to practice it as it should! God knows this, and He has provided the 'way of escape' from its consequences. Faith in Jesus Christ, the salvation He brings, and the power of His Holy Spirit, can help people grow in the love, knowledge and ways of God, and how to walk in them. Parents of children who are not following the Lord and His ways, can still pray for them, love them, care for them, show interest in them and do what they can possibly do to seek their salvation and regeneration.

Teach, by word and by example. **Educate**, in the ways of God. **Pray**, for their salvation. **Love**, in the grace, wisdom and ways of God. **Commit** them into God's hands.

QUESTIONS

1. What is meant by "teaching by precept and example"?
2. Why is this so important?
3. How can we learn to discern between good and evil?
4. What can we do about evil influences?
5. Why is salvation (regeneration) so important?

6. What can I do if my teaching has been rejected?

PRAYER REGARDING EDUCATION

Please pray for:

- Christian education: Christian-based schools, Colleges, Bible Schools and Bible training places.
- A strong Christian influence in education, at all levels.
- Organisations which encourage high quality education.
- Godly parents, school teachers, Boards of Trustees members, people in the Ministry of Education.
- Teaching that is true, pure, and consistent with God's ways.
- Against all evil influences: all those things which undermine truth, good morals, unselfishness, etc.
- Children to discern right from wrong, good from evil, truth from error, and that they will, by God's grace, reject what is wrong and follow after what is right.
- A Godly Christian influence in schools through Christian teachers, students and Christian groups.
- People who can clearly present the Christian worldview and Christian ethics in a way which will speak into many people's lives and persuade them of the importance of following God's ways.
- Strong Christian leadership at all levels of society, including strong Christian leaders who will speak into their own racial groups.

Bible Study books

Over the past 47 years that *Pray for the Nation* has been running, every month we have provided a Bible study on prayer, revival, the church, the government and nation, and other important aspects of our Christian lives. Well over 3 million of these were posted out in the early days. Many of them have been translated into other languages, and well over 100,000 books of them have been printed. Now days, these have been on the internet and are available **free**, either as books and/or downloadable from the internet; but not all of them are available in both forms yet.

For further details, please see our website at:

<https://www.pray-for-the-nation.org/bible-study-books.php>

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