



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)

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The eyes of the Lord are looking throughout the entire earth, to strengthen those whose heart is true to Him. ... The Lord does not see as people see – they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." (2 Chronicles 16:9; 1 Samuel 16:7)

What does the Lord see?

What sorts of people does God see? Broadly speaking, there are seven "groups" of people with regard to their relationship to Him and with other Christians.

1. His sons and daughters who are faithful, passionate, obedient, Spirit-filled believers who seek after Him, worship Him, and truly seek to live the Christian life as it should be lived – Believers 'with whom the Lord is well-pleased'.

Please pray:

- That they will always be strong in the Lord and the power of His might.
- That they will always remain true to Him, His Word and His ways.
- That they will actively share their faith with others, and seek to encourage other Christians to live in God's ways too.
- That they will fulfil God's calling to them.

2. Christians who love God, but the cares and pressures of the world are making inroads into their lives. While they may have times of worship and fellowship with other Christians, often these occur only when they "have the time to fit it in".

Please pray:

- That they will recognise that they need to "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these [other] things will be added to you." (Matthew 6:33).
- That they will be led by the Spirit as to how to fit into their lives all that God calls them to do and not lose sight of their Lord and Saviour but will truly follow Him.
- That they will know God's help and strength to do all things well, to the glory of His name.

3. "Sometimes" Christians – people who are "on and off again" as far as their Christian lives and witness are concerned. *If and when it suits them*, they may read the Bible, pray, and fellowship with other Christians, but their lives are largely self-centred rather than God-centred.

Please pray:

- That they will see, and respond to, the need to live the Christian life at all times, not just when they feel like it.
- That God's Spirit will speak to them and restore them to a place of willingness to follow the Lord wholeheartedly.

4. Backslidden, 'careless' Christians who are not living as they should, and are not a good witness, either to other Christians or to the world around them. Some of the ways they are living are contrary to the ways Christians are called to live.

Please pray:

- That God will convict them (and us) of ways in which He is wanting to speak to them, and cause them to change to ways that are pleasing to God and which will bring blessing to themselves and to other people.

5. "Good people" who may "believe in God" and do good things (works) but have never been born again or become followers of Jesus.

Please pray:

- That Christians will be witnesses to them, and the Holy Spirit will cause them to hear and respond to the call of God on their lives; that they will become true believers and followers of the Lord.

What does God see when He looks at me?

The above are five different ways in which people live – most of them would call themselves ‘Christians’ but with varying degrees of commitment, serving God, and obedience to Him and His ways.

God is calling *all* Christians to discipleship – to be true followers of Jesus Christ and to live the Christian life in all its fulness.

There are also:

6. People who are strongly influenced by the world, the flesh and the devil; whose lives are far from what they should be – secular, living in undesirable ways, and who would not call themselves Christians.

Please pray:

- That Christians will, as God leads and inspires them, be witnesses to the Gospel God has given us, the ways God has changed our lives and can change others.
- That the Gospel will be powerfully demonstrated and presented to the world around us, and for the Holy Spirit to call and draw people to salvation and into God’s Kingdom.

7. Opponents of the Gospel. People who actively seek to turn people away from the Christian faith and the church; who oppose the Lord and His people, and “the Way, the Truth and the Life” of Jesus and His followers.

Please pray:

- For the softening of the hearts, and the transformation of the minds, of those who oppose the Gospel; those who refuse to believe in God – let alone love God with all their heart, mind, soul and strength.

God loves *all* people, no matter which “group” they fit into, but He loves us so much that He not only send His Son, Jesus, into the world to open the way for our salvation, but He also sent His Holy Spirit to teach us and empower us to live as He says we should! (See Genesis 6:8; 1 Kings 15:5; 1 Peter 3:10-12)

For those who are Christians ...

Not only does God look at us as individual Christians, but He also looks at the churches – His “body” here on earth. What does He see? We get a glance of what He saw when He looked at some churches in John’s day, as John recorded what God said to seven churches (**Revelation chapters 2 and 3**). While there were some wonderful things for which they were commended, there were also some areas that

needed real prayer *and action!* (See Ephesians 5:25-27)

1. Jesus said to one church they “**had lost their first love**” (2:4-7). Think of love in its highest form – the love between husband and wife, parents and children, true friends, God’s love for us and our love for God. The joy and zeal and commitment of “first love” was lacking. Instead of growing in love, love was declining – maybe almost non-existent.

2. Jesus said to another church they “**thought they were alive but were dead**” (3:1-3). Life is more than numbers; more than wealth; more than show; more than outward actions. The life Jesus talks about is the life of a clean heart, a pure spirit, and a right relationship with God and other people.

3. Jesus said to a third church they were “**neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm**” (3:15-18). There was apathy, lack of real commitment, a lot of work but little fruit, disengagement.

What does God see when He looks at the Church, and ‘my’ church?

Let us pray about the matters mentioned above – the conditions of some of our churches that are like the three mentioned.

Pray also for your church – for God’s Spirit to move powerfully amongst the people you meet with; for worship that is in Spirit and in Truth; for the preaching of God’s Word; for true fellowship between the people; for outreach to those who are not yet true followers of Jesus Christ and for their salvation.

It is very worthwhile looking at Revelation chapters 2 and 3 regarding what Jesus said to the seven churches:

- (a) What He commended them for.
- (b) What He criticised them for.
- (c) What He told them to do.

Pray about what Jesus said, in these three areas, regarding your own church and other churches; and regarding your life personally.

What does God see and what does He say?

Jesus said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore **pray** that the Lord of the harvest will send out labourers into His harvest. (Luke 10:2)



Pillars of Society

9. THE 9th PILLAR: MEDIA

How can [young] people keep their way pure? By guarding themselves according to God's Word. "With my whole heart I seek You Lord; don't let me stray from Your commands. I treasure your Word in my heart so that I will not sin against You." See Psalm 119:9-11.

These days, people are "bombarded" by the media – by an ever-increasing amount of exposure to the media, for example, through advertising and many other ways where we are confronted by it even when we aren't interested in what it is telling us.

We are constantly absorbing information from many sources – most of which have an influence on our thinking, ideas and beliefs. The power of these "influences" is probably much greater than we are generally aware of. "Where did I get that idea?" "What makes me think this way either consciously or unconsciously?"

Probably the major sources of ideas and influences are through media such as:

- **Written media** – especially newspapers, magazines and books.
- **Verbal media** – such as radio, public speakers, forums, etc.
- **Visual media** – television, films.
- **Internet** – numerous sources of media information (or misinformation!)
- **Social media** – where anyone and everyone can express their ideas and communicate with the world.
- **Digital media** – in this digital age, through which all of the above occur.

"Media" is neutral

Of course, the media is neutral, in the sense that it is not good or bad in itself. But it has the potential to be something that is extremely useful (we "couldn't live without it" these days)

and it also has the potential to be easily misused, in undesirable and very unhealthy ways.

Like the tree of the **knowledge** of **GOOD** and **EVIL** (Genesis 2:15-17 and 3:1-6), so the media, like many other things, can bring good as well as bad to the world.

God created all things good, but we have corrupted many things, just as Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate of this tree, hence bringing into the world the potential for things which are good but can also be used for evil.

The media can be used for good *and* evil – godly things or ungodly ones; to spread truth or lies; good and helpful things as well as bad influences. For example: morality and immorality; love and hatred; peace and violence; unity and disunity; plus extremism, censorship of right opinions, and biased influences.

News media and Advertising

Selective reporting by the **media** (what they *want* to report, but not necessarily the rest or "the other side" of the story) strongly influences what we believe and therefore how we feel and react. After all, almost everything we know (good, bad or indifferent) comes through what we see or hear. Most of our opinions are based on this. The importance of this fact is often overlooked, especially when we feel we have a "balanced view" on the true situation.

Much of what we believe, and how we think about other people or situations, is based on what we see and hear. Morality, for example, is strongly influenced by all types of media.

Advertising also usually selects the things that may influence us to buy something, or what we should do, versus not buying a competitor's product, or doing something else.

So what we desire, or want, or "must have" is strongly influenced by advertising, and some of this advertising may use very subtle or misleading psychology.

Christian use of the media

On the positive side, the media is open to the Christian community to use and to share the Gospel, to have Christian content on all aspects of the Christian life, plus the teaching of the Scriptures, the life of Christ, and what it means to be a follower of Christ.

Secular media may also be used for Christian purposes. Christian comment on world affairs, and what other people believe, can also be broadcast through the media.

As Christians we should do all we can to encourage Christian use of the media. We also need to be very careful, as Christians, that what is broadcast is true, true to the Scriptures and honouring to the Lord. In no way do we want to bring disrepute to the Christian faith – though Christians things will be opposed and attacked by many who are in the world, and by the powers of darkness which seek to silence the Christian message and find ways to discredit them, Christians and the Church.

Some relevant Scriptures

Matthew 7:17-18; Luke 6:45; Romans 12:9, 21; Philippians 4:8-9; 1 John 4:5-6.

QUESTIONS

1. In what ways is the media used to the benefit of people, and in what ways can it be harmful?
2. How can we be more discerning about what we believe from the media? How can people be kept from deception and lies?
3. Is the media really “neutral”? In what ways are they, and in what ways are they not?

4. How can we avoid becoming “brainwashed” by what we hear and read in the media?
5. How can media advertising be used for good purposes, and used in a harmful way?
6. In what ways do you think the Christian world is using the media well? In what ways do you think it lacks, and what can be done about this?
7. What can we do about direct and indirect attacks on the Christian faith, that come through the media?
8. What can we do about the strong and insidious effects on morality which come through the media?

Prayer for the Media

Please pray:

- That Christians will make full use of the media to share the Gospel in spite of possible opposition. Pray for all Christians who are involved in media production and broadcasts.
- That the Christian use of the media will be pleasing to the Lord, and proclaim the truth.
- That people will come to the Lord and be taught His Word and His ways through the media.
- That the world’s use of the media will be such that truth is always more important than scandal, gossip, suggestive accusations, or things which are immoral or degrading.
- That high standards will be set for the media, to protect against things which are harmful to people, families and society as a whole.
- That people will not be deceived by things they hear or see but will come to know the truth?

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>