



Pray for the Nation ~ INOI MO TE MOTU

Intercessors for New Zealand

105 Woodman Drive, Tawa, Wellington 5028, New Zealand
ifnz@xtra.co.nz <https://www.pray-for-the-nation.org/>

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)

JUNE 2019

You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world... therefore, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in Heaven... Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to everyone. (Matthew 5:13-16; Mark 16:15)

Movement Day

Some reflections from MOVEMENT DAY

In May, there was a two-day **Movement Day** gathering of leaders from different churches and Christian organisations throughout New Zealand. The following are some reflections from that gathering.

UNITY

A major theme which recurred throughout the gathering was that of the need for unity, between churches and between different races. An outline of the history of Aotearoa New Zealand was given, from the first coming of Captain Cook to Aotearoa; the coming of the Gospel; to where we are today and what may lie ahead in the future. Mention was made of a fairly recent series of events in which teams from Britain came to our country for times of repentance and reconciliation between the English and Maori, with many marae having been visited for this purpose. There is, of course, an ongoing need for Pakeha and Maori to work together, and to work in united ways with people of all cultures and races – especially in and through the churches. Remember what Jesus prayed (John 17:18-23)

- **Please pray** that Christians of all races will be united in sharing the Christian message throughout our country and that the sharing of our Faith will not be hindered in any way by division, or by Christians and churches not cooperating and working with one another.
- **Please pray** that wherever there is a need for reconciliation between Christians, churches, and Christian organisations, that this will happen.
- **Pray specifically** for churches in your area that they will pray together, work together and

support each other so that God's blessing and power will lead to our effective witness and service within, and to, our local community.

WORKING WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Christians and churches have a lot to offer to their local communities. We are to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth. One of the ways we can do this is by serving in our communities – councils, community services, people in need, local government, social services, etc. Lest we become "too spiritual" to get involved in the world around us, let us read and remember what Jesus said in Matthew 25:31-46.

- **Please pray** for community outreaches to share the Gospel, for example at Christmas and Easter especially, and in other community events.
- **Please pray** for the Christian community and what we can do in our society, especially by working together as a team.
- **Pray** that Christians will "catch the vision" of serving in our suburbs, town or city, and in a united way, be effective "salt and light" in our areas.

INVOLVEMENT IN PUBLIC ISSUES AND POLICY

Public issues and policies obviously have an impact on our society and the ways we live. Christians and churches, especially when united and speaking with a united voice, can have a great influence on the policies which are developed. This applies to matters which are dealt with by Parliament – our central Government – and also local and regional affairs. Law changes, and council policies and decisions, can be influenced by our prayers and input into decisions which are to be made.

- **Pray** that Christians and churches will pray over these areas – for God's will to be done,

and for God's people to do what they can to be light and salt in these areas.

- **Please pray** for all Christians who work in the areas of national government, regional and local councils, and other policy-making areas, that they will have a Godly influence; for wisdom, and what is good and best, in their fields of work.
- **Pray** for churches, that they will be a united voice in society for "whatever is true, honourable, just, pure, pleasing, commendable, excellent and worthy of praise" (Philippians 4:8)

THE CHURCH IN THE MARKETPLACE

The Church and the Marketplace can be two very different and largely separated places. But instead of the Marketplace being a totally different place which is unaffected by the Church, both need to work together – that is, the Church *in* the Marketplace, not the Church *and* the Marketplace. We should never underestimate the influence the Church does have, and should have, on the Marketplace, nor should we underestimate the influence the Marketplace has on every one of us.

- **Pray** that every Christian will have a sense of their calling to serve, as one of Jesus' followers, and to take that seriously and prayerfully. "Lord, how can You use me to follow You and serve You in the areas where I live and work?"
- **Pray** that church leaders, especially, will unite to pray for, and speak into, areas affecting the town, city or region around them.
- **Pray** that we will all support and encourage leaders in the churches and Christian organisations, to speak with one voice and lead Christians into effective ways of serving the Lord in the areas around us.

WITNESSES IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Jesus told His disciples to "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15, 20). We should have the Good News in our own lives and our churches, but from there it needs to go out into the streets, towns and nations – into the whole world. Into the community, the workplace, the schools, prisons, welfare services, young people, the elderly ... to "all the world". By our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, our following of Jesus, the way we live, by our love and good works – they will know we are Christians, and, we pray, will be saved and become followers and servants of the Lord.

PRAY that these things *will be* so:

- That the good news will go out into the streets, towns and nation; into the

community, workplace, schools, prisons, welfare services; to the young, the elderly, ...

- That people will know we are Christians by our love, and that they will become saved followers and servants of the Lord.
- That leaders will listen to each other carefully and work together, not apart or in opposition.

continued from page 4

QUESTIONS

1. Who or what comes first in my life? Do I love God with *all* my heart, soul, mind and strength?
2. Am I too busy with other things instead of spending time with the Lord? See Luke 10:38-42.
3. What does it mean to "love my neighbour as I love myself" and "love other people as Jesus loves me"?
4. In what ways do I express my love for the Lord and for other people?
5. What was the main point of Jesus' story in Matthew 25:31-46?
6. What are some of the ways in which we can express our loyalty to a person?
7. In what ways is true love, costly?

A PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I thank and praise You for your amazing love to me.

Even in difficult times – times when I think You have forsaken me – You have seen me through.

Thank You that You are my Shepherd and I am one of your followers – a sheep who belongs to the Shepherd.

Thank You Father that your love is so great that You sent your only Son Jesus into this world.

That You Lord Jesus for all You gave and all You suffered for my sake and my salvation.

Dear Lord, please help me to love you with all my heart and soul and strength.

Please help me to love other people – especially those in need – as Jesus loves and cares for me.

Help me to be a good and faithful servant all my days.

I love You Lord!



Pillars of Society

12. THE 12th PILLAR: LOVE

THE FIRST THREE COMMANDMENTS

There are hundreds of 'commandments' in the Bible but what are the first three? We need to know them and live by them, because Jesus said that "On these commandments hang *all* the Law and the prophets" (Matthew 22:40). The Prophets were those people whose messages were frequently calls to people to return to God's ways – His Law and His commandments.

Matthew 22:36-38

"You shall love the LORD your God with *all* your heart, and with *all* your soul, and with *all* your might." (Quoted from Deuteronomy 6:5). Jesus added, "This is the greatest and first commandment."

One major problem most people face today (including Christians) is that we are so busy that God gets "squeezed into a corner"; it is so hard to put Him *first* in all things.

Matthew 22:39-40

"You shall love your neighbour as yourself." (Leviticus 19:18)

How do we love ourselves? Most of us, most of the time, don't find it too hard to love ourselves – but to love other people the same way might seem a bit much!

Besides this, who is our neighbour? The rich, happy, well-to-do family next door? Or the neighbour on the other side – a solo parent, struggling to make ends meet, with a teenager-gone-wild and a couple of little children?

Wanting to justify himself, a lawyer said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?" Jesus replied with the parable of the 'Good Samaritan' (Luke 10:29-37).

- A man had been robbed, beaten and left half dead.

- A priest saw him and passed down the road on the other side – he was in a hurry to get to the Temple on time!
- A Levite did the same thing – he also was in a hurry to get to 'church'.
- Then a Samaritan, despised by the Jews as being 'the wrong race' and an inferior sort of person, stopped, bandaged his wounds, took him to a hotel and took care of him. When the Samaritan left, he paid the bill for the wounded man until he could come back again and pay any further expenses.

Who was the neighbour to the man in need? The Samaritan, a foreigner who looked after someone in need and paid for his expenses – at a cost to himself of time, money and effort, but because of his love for his 'neighbour'.

When Jesus asked the lawyer, who was the neighbour to the wounded man – the priest, the Levite or the Samaritan, he answered, "The one who showed him mercy." Then Jesus said, "**Go and do likewise.**" "You shall love your 'neighbour' as you love yourself."

Paul, in Romans 13:8-10 says, "Don't owe anything to anyone, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the Law. The commandments: You shall not commit adultery; you shall not murder; you shall not steal; you shall not covet; and any other commandment, are summed up in these words – 'Love your neighbour *as yourself*'. Love doesn't wrong a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the Law."

So "Love God, and Love your neighbours *as you love yourself*" are the two greatest commandments, Jesus said – and both of these commandments are found in the Old Testament.

What if I have great difficulty loving myself? – perhaps because of what I have done, or

because of my early home life, or how I have been treated by other people.

Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian (Roman) cohort, was called by God to go and see Peter, who was no friend of Roman centurions. But the Lord said to Peter, “Don’t call ‘Unclean’ what I have made clean”! (Acts 10:13-16). If God has cleansed us, saved us and called us His own, how can we despise ourselves and not love what God has both created and redeemed? How can we call ourselves ‘Unclean’ when **God** says we have been cleansed in Jesus’ blood? We need to learn to accept and love ourselves as *Jesus does* – despite anything or everything to the contrary.

So these are the **First and Greatest** Commandment, and the **Second Greatest** Commandment; but there is a third great commandment!

A New Commandment

Jesus also said, “A **new commandment** I give to you, that you love one another as **I have loved you.**” (John 13:34-35 and 15:12-13)

So, we not only need to love our neighbour as we love *ourselves*; we need to love one another in the same way as *Jesus* loves us! And think what He has done for us because He loves us – all He has given us, even His life, for our salvation and for eternal life with the Lord in Glory, forever!

Finally, Jesus *also* said, “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments” (John 14:15). Faith without works is dead (James 2:17).

- The **First** Commandment parallels the first three of the Ten Commandments: no other gods; no idols; no blasphemy.
- The **Second** Commandment parallels the other seven commandments.
- The **New** Commandment also tells us, in practical terms, how to love one another – think about how *He* loves us and how *He* loves other people – and seek to do likewise!

Three kinds of love

thelo (to wish). E.g., “I would love to ...”

phileo (to be a friend). E.g., *philadelphia* (brotherly love); *philanthropy* (love for people), *philandros* (love between a man and woman).

agape (sacrificial love). E.g., missionaries; martyrs (Christians killed for their Faith); people who give their lives (wealth, work, fame, home, friends, health, etc.) for others.

“God so loved [*agape*] the world that He gave His only Son”. And Jesus so loved the world He gave His life for us.

A further example in Matthew 25:31-46 is when the King (Jesus) said, “I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger and you welcomed me; I was naked and you gave me clothing; I was sick and you took care of me; I was in prison and you visited me.” The righteous said, “Lord, when was it that we ...?” And Jesus will answer, “Just as you have done it for one of the least of these ... you have done it for Me”.

We need to:

- Give love, and receive love (sometimes it is harder to receive than give!)
- Love even our enemies, and those who despise us.

Love is ...

A sincere, genuine desire for what is best; action where possible; compassion, kindness and care.

Love and loyalty

Love is expressed in loyalty and support to those God has given to us. Jesus exemplifies this in Psalm 23, as the Good Shepherd:

The **Lord** is my Shepherd (v1) – He provides (v1), feeds (v2), guides (v3), encourages (v3), protects (v4), comforts (v4) and loves (5,6). What loyalty! What love!

No wonder **Love** (love for people and sacrificial love) should be a major Pillar in Society!

continued on page 2

Pray for the Nation, 105 Woodman Drive, Tawa, Wellington 5028, New Zealand (Coordinator: Brian Caughley)

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