



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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It is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for His good pleasure ... so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, in which *you shine like stars in the world.* (Philippians 2:13, 15)

Movement Day

(continued)

Reaching our People

The reason for mentioning the **Movement Day** again (previously mentioned in last month's Prayer Letter) is that this gathering majored on reaching our nation city-by-city. It dealt with uniting Christians and churches to be more involved in our communities in order to serve and to share the Christian message with people everywhere. This is already being done in many places, for example those mentioned below. At the Movement Day, people shared many encouraging things that are happening in the following towns and cities:

Northland	Gisborne	Whakatane
West Auckland	Te Awamutu	Taupo
Te Puke	Waimate	Christchurch
Tauranga	Kawerau	Invercargill
Rotorua	Whanganui	Gore

Some of the things in which churches in these places are involved, include:

Assisting the police, social work, counselling, united prayer for their city, community events (e.g., at Christmas and Easter), schools, prisons, welfare, home and families, gangs, workplaces, youth, town or city councils, homeless and poor, etc.

- **Please pray** for the above towns as Christians reach out into their communities in these, and other, ways.
- **Pray** for your own town or city: for unity between Christians, churches and their leaders.
- **Pray** for a God-given vision for prayer and outreach into your community.

Jesus and His disciples travelled throughout Israel. Jesus sent out His twelve disciples; He sent out 72 people, two-by-two. They travelled from Tyre to Jerusalem; from town-to-town and city-by-city. They healed the sick, ministered to the poor and needy, proclaimed the Gospel and shared God's love with the people.

- **Pray** that this vision will spread; that pastors/shepherds will lead the way, and people will follow their lead.
- **Pray** for the ministry of the Christian organisation City-by-City, as they seek to share, encourage and support this vision of reaching the nation, city-by-city. Their website is <https://www.citybycity.co.nz> and their overall vision – **Transforming Towns and Cities through Strategic Unity in the Body of Christ.**
- Prayer, divinely-inspired strategy and a commitment to united outreach in our cities and towns, are keys to reaching our nation with the whole Gospel of Jesus Christ – physically and spiritually, as He and His followers did. **Please pray** that this will both continue to grow, and spread throughout our land.

CHURCH LEADERS

Leaders lead (otherwise they are not leaders!). There is an awesome responsibility on leaders, so we need to pray for them and support them. The words "pastor" and "shepherd" are synonymous; pastors shepherd God's people – His sheep. But pastors should not be expected to "do everything" in the church; they are called to shepherd. Other people need to do the administrative and other roles that are needed in the church (the "ecclesia", God's people). If the sheep stray from the ways of **good** shepherds, they are in danger of following "strangers" (including strange teachings or

practices), or of becoming captivated by “thieves and bandits” who deliberately try to steal the sheep. Thieves come to steal, kill and destroy, but Jesus, the Good Shepherd, comes to bring an abundance of life, not destruction and death. (John 10:1-18)

With these thoughts in mind, let us pray for:

- Shepherds/pastors who are called and equipped by God to lead His people.
- For their responsibilities as God-given leaders in the churches.
- That they will feed and protect the people they are responsible to care for.
- That all Christians will hear the Shepherd’s voice and follow Him, not the voice of strangers.
- For Christians who have gone astray into false teachings and ways, that they will return to God’s ways, as shown in God’s Word.

Psalm 23 speaks of the Lord God as our Shepherd, Provider, Guide, Teacher, Protector and the one Who supremely loves us. Praise God, every Christian should know the Lord in these ways, and many other ways too.

God has given to the Church:

Apostles who are sent forth to share the Gospel in all its fulness.

Prophets who bring God’s word for the Church and the world, both for the present time and the future.

Evangelists who share the Good News of life and salvation through Jesus Christ, with those who are not yet Christians.

Pastors who, under the Lord, help shepherd God’s people.

Teachers who teach the Word and ways of God.

These gifts to the Church are to equip the saints (all of us!) for the work of ministry, and for building up the Body of Christ until we come to the unity of the faith, the knowledge of the Son of God, maturity and the fulness of living like Jesus – read Ephesians 4:11-13.

Just as Jesus led His disciples and sent them forth, so too God has given us leaders to equip and send us all out in Jesus’ name, to share God’s love and the fulness of His salvation.

- Please continue to pray for the leaders God has placed in the Church, to lead His people in these ways.

- Pray that we will all respond to the call of God on our lives to do *our* part in ministry; to encourage and help one another to grow in the ways of God; to be united in the Faith; and to know and grow into the fulness of life in Jesus, our Example, Teacher and Saviour.
- Pray that we all will recognise the awesome responsibility we have to demonstrate to the world the amazing grace we can have through Christ – life now, and eternal life, in all its fulness. For this, Jesus came! Praise God!

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PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

God warns cities and nations to turn from their wicked ways. God calls us to choose who we will serve – with the warning that worship of false gods and idols will ultimately bring us judgement and troubles.

- **Pray** for the “pillars” mentioned on pages 3 and 4.
- **Pray** that our nation will turn back to God and His ways.
- **Pray** that we will become a society which is blessed by God and by obedience, and not suffer because of our wicked, Godless ways.
- **Pray** that people will increasingly choose to serve the Lord and follow His ways, rather than worldliness and the ways of the flesh and the devil. (Joshua 24:14-15).
- **Pray** that Christians will lead by example – that we will read God’s Word and follow His teachings in every aspect of our lives – spiritual, social and physical.
- **Pray** that our nation will be strong and blessed by strong *Pillars in our Society*.



Pillars of Society

THE WORD OF GOD

The Bible speaks of the ways of God for the society in which His people live. All the *Pillars of Society* mentioned in the previous studies describe His ways – the best ways – for us to live. If we choose not to live in these ways, we will suffer the consequences because God’s ways are always right and best for us. Of course, Christians live in a world that is frequently contrary to the ways God has directed, so there will be conflict between how Christians should live and how worldly society lives.

Because Jesus the Messiah came to earth and taught the ways of the Kingdom of God (the Kingdom of Heaven), and the Holy Spirit has spoken to us through the Word of God, we have God’s directions for us as Christians.

The New Testament is the revelation of God to Christians. In it, God has revealed to us how we are to live. He is our Good Shepherd, and we are His sheep. Sheep follow their Shepherd. John 10:1-18 reveals a lot about how our relationship with Jesus, the Good Shepherd, is to be.

1. Anyone who tries to enter the sheepfold in a way other than by the gate, is a thief and bandit, but the one who enters by the gate is the Shepherd of the sheep.
2. The sheep hear the Shepherd’s voice, He calls them by name [He knows them] and He leads them out.
3. He goes ahead of them and the sheep follow Him because they know His voice. They won’t follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.

This is a wonderful illustration of Jesus’ relationship with us as Christians, in contrast to

those who are not yet Christians. Jesus teaches us His ways, and as sheep who hear and know His voice, we follow Him.

A wise society will also follow His ways and principles! In our own lives, and in our prayers for our society, we need to apply what the Word of God says to us.

In previous studies we have looked at the following Pillars of Society:

- **The Lord.** Almighty God is not only our Creator but also the Ruler over our world and its nations. Psalm 33:12 says, “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.” For a nation to acknowledge Him as Lord, it needs to follow His ways, as taught in His Word.
- **The Family.** If families are to be blessed, they also need to follow God’s ways. The New Testament teaches us a lot about how we should live, both individually and as families; we do well to follow His ways!
- **The Church.** One of the purposes of the Church is to teach the ways of the Lord. He has given us the Scriptures to teach us how we should live, not only to obey Him as His people, but also for wisdom and the blessing of following Him.
- **Authority.** Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords. He has authority over us, and the teaching of His Word is the way we know how to live under His authority, as His followers and servants.
- **Righteousness.** To live the right way – God’s way – is to be righteous, and this is pleasing to God. In fact, it is foolish not to live by His Word and His ways, because God knows what is best!
- **Welfare.** As people, we tend to look after ourselves first, but the Bible says we are to “love other people [our ‘neighbours’] in the same way as we love ourselves” – and “as I have loved you”, Jesus said. (Matthew 22:36-40; John 13:34-35). Social welfare is just like that – caring for others, in the ways we would like to be cared for.

- **Justice.** Justice is exercising the laws and moral laws of society. Again, the Bible tells us the ways in which God exercises His justice when we disobey (or obey) His laws. Ideally, our society should follow God's laws, and justice regarding wrongdoing.
- **Education.** Education is not just teaching people knowledge and skills; it should also include wisdom in how to handle life as a whole. Proverbs, especially, has a lot to say about this, as does a lot of the Bible.
- **The media.** A lot of what is broadcast through the 'media' (in the broadest sense of the word) is not compatible with what God teaches us through His Word. A lot of it teaches us, by word, picture or example, wrong things; wrong ideas; wrong ways of living, and so on. God's Word shows us what is true, honourable, just, pure, pleasing, commendable, excellent and worthy of praise (Philippians 4:8-9)
- **Business and Culture.** Many business practices, and what we call "our culture", may conflict with what the Lord teaches us. Again, wisdom and obedience to the Word of God show us what things are wrong and will not bring blessing to us or our society.
- **Love.** Love for God, for His Word and His ways, and love for one another, are fundamental to a great and good society.

These are foundational principles for a good, healthy society, and these are the ways God says we should live!

Mary, the mother of Jesus, at the wedding in Cana, said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it!" (John 2:5). This is a profound statement, which we should always remember – whatever God tells us to do, we are to do it!

How does the Lord speak to us?

Very simply, the primary way God speaks to us is through the Scripture, the Bible, the Word of God which He has given us for all time. All things are to be tested by what God has said in His Word.

As Christians, we are to learn and obey the will and ways of God. The Lord may speak to us

directly by His Holy Spirit. He may speak to us through other people, but because we can all mistake what we hear or think, we need to "test all things" by God's Word. (1 Corinthians 14:29; 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22; 1 John 4:1)

In society, some things we are encouraged to do are those things which are "Politically Correct", including things which may be contrary to God's Word. Some people excuse this by saying "This is the twenty-first century" or "These days we ..." as if to say that we no longer have to do what "was" right because we have moved on from those days. In other words, they might say that what is right varies from time to time; it is relative to society's desires, wants or what is "acceptable" by the majority.

For Christians, this is not so. We should be living by God's standards of righteousness, holiness and Godliness, not by wrong or evil ways of the world.

Ultimately, in praying for our society, we need to pray that the strongholds of evil, sin, the flesh, etc., are broken; that people will come to repentance, and faith in Jesus Christ, for forgiveness and salvation.

May God transform our society and help us to conform to His will by following His Word. ***"Whatever He says to you, do it!"***

QUESTIONS

1. Why is the Bible still so important to us, almost 2000 years since it was written?
2. Is it worth praying for a Godless society which largely rejects God and the Bible?
3. How does God see our society and how should we be praying for it?
4. Can God transform a nation? How?
5. Jesus spent about as much time speaking about physical and social matters, as He did about spiritual matters. Why? What does this teach us?
6. Which areas of society do you particularly feel you should pray for? Are you praying?

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