



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)

SEPTEMBER 2020

The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom, and whatever else you get, get insight. The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom; a perverse tongue will be silenced. Listen to advice and accept instruction, so that you may gain wisdom for the future. Buy Truth, and do not sell it; buy Wisdom, instruction, and understanding.

Proverbs 4:7; 10:31; 19:20; 23:23

DECISIONS, DECISIONS, DECISIONS ...

WISDOM FOR OUR GOVERNMENT

Please pray about the following situations, for which important decisions need to be made.

COVID

Border control.

Monitoring, contact tracing, testing, quarantine, managed isolation, self-isolation, eradication of Covid.

Alert Level changes: currently Level 3 for Auckland and Level 2 for the rest of NZ.

Mandatory wearing of masks on public transport from Monday 31 August. Distancing, use of QR scans or sign-in at places people visit, hand sanitising.

Long term plans for preventing a recurrence of Covid or similar outbreaks; learning from what has happened so far.

People who currently have Covid and those suffering ongoing effects from it.

Everyone involved in reducing Covid spread, and treating people needing help with Covid. Prime Minister - Jacinda Ardern; Minister of Health - Chris Hipkins; Director-General of Health - Ashley Bloomfield, and all their advisors.

Social effects and changes caused by Covid, and lockdown/Alert Level restrictions.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Debt repayment: On 25 March, up to \$52 billion was authorised by Parliament to cover all costs associated with Covid. The current \$13 billion work subsidy ends on 1 September. An extra (up to) \$14 billion is

available if this subsidy needs to be extended after Tuesday 1 September.

Ongoing expenses associated with Covid.

Business closures, unemployment, huge decreases in tourism, the hospitality industry, air travel, etc. Currently, over 210,000 people are unemployed.

Balancing economic recovery with the public Health and Safety costs associated with ongoing Covid spread.

Wisdom and right decisions in our new Government (irrespective of Party/Parties): MPs who stand for, and vote for, right values such as: truth, justice, morality, restraint of evil, etc; and that all parties and MPs will work for the welfare of the whole country, not just for political gain.

RIGHTEOUS LEADERSHIP

'Righteous' means acting in the right way – as defined by God, the righteous Judge – just, moral, correct, true, pure, etc. **Please pray** that righteous leaders will be raised up in NZ.

Suggested prayer topics for praying for the Elections, include:

- **New Election date**: Saturday 17 October, with a starting date for voting of 3 October. Pray about all the changes which this will involve, and decisions which need to be made.
- **Electoral Commission**. Elections are an enormous undertaking, especially because of the elections being delayed by 4 weeks. **Pray** for the organisation and administration of the elections. **Pray** against any possible interference in the electoral process, from whatever source – including Covid. **Pray** for an election and referendums that are both

effective and efficient. **Pray** for the logistics and all the people involved.

- **Political parties** and their candidates, plus their lists of possible List MPs after the elections. Also for the continuation of campaigning up until the elections.
- **Government** will handle the economy and Covid wisely and well.
- **People will vote.** At the last (2017) election about 940,000 eligible people did not vote.

RESOURCES

The two Referendums leaflets in your Electoral Commission letter, which you should have received in the last few weeks (possibly last month).

www.familyfirst.org.nz **Family First's** website which includes how MPs have previously voted on important moral issues like abortion, etc.

www.valueyourvote.nz for copies of **Family First's** "Election 2020" booklet.

www.prayeratparliament.org.nz/downloads

Prayer @ Parliament's website. See the download: **40 Days of Prayer** (10 August – 19 September)

Government websites: www.elections.nz and www.referendums.govt.nz

GODLY AUTHORITY, WHICH SERVES THE PEOPLE

Further suggested prayer topics for praying for the Elections include:

- **Current MPs** – both Electorate MPs and Party List MPs, who will contest the elections again.
- **Retiring MPs** – Current MPs who will be retiring from Parliament – some make easy transition back into the private sector; but others, especially some who have been MPs for some time, can find it very difficult.
- **Christian MPs** – irrespective of the party they belong to – that they will be returned to Parliament, together with **new** Christian MPs to enter Parliament.
- **Christian leaders** will teach their congregations about Christians' civic responsibilities; motivate them to vote; and direct them to available resources.
- **Christians will vote**, and vote intelligently, discerningly and prayerfully. It is easy for people to 'vote the way they always do' but Christians need to vote prayerfully and ask the Lord how they should vote – for the Party, the MP to represent them, and in the two Referendums.

- **Younger Christians**, especially in the 18-30 age group, will turn out and vote. In the last elections, about 30% of all 18-30 year-olds did **not** vote.
- **Christians** especially, will overcome barriers which may lead to them not voting, for example:
 - Separation of Church and State** – "Christians don't get involved in politics."
 - Apathy** – "one vote doesn't make any difference."
 - Cynicism** – "what is said or promised often never gets done."

Romans 13:1-5 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and **those authorities that exist have been instituted by God**. Therefore whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you wish to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive its approval; for it is **God's servant** for your good. But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid, for the authority does not bear the sword [punish] in vain! It is the **servant of God** to execute wrath [punishment] on those who do wrong. Therefore one must be subject, not only because of wrath but also because of conscience.

Pray for a Godly nation, with Godly leadership, and Christians who will respect, honour and pray for our leaders.

Give thanks for the country in which we live – a democracy, with freedom to choose, live in peace and under protection; with a good welfare system, education and public health system. Nothing is perfect (or ever will be in this world) but compared with billions of other people, we have a huge amount to give thanks for, praise God.

Pray that we will be faithful stewards of all we have, faithful to God and the gifts He has given us, seeking to love and bless those people in need and share the wonderfully good news of a loving God Who sent His Son to bring salvation, deliverance, forgiveness and the gift of eternal life to everyone who comes to Him, believes in Him and follows His ways.



REVIVE US AGAIN!

8

Repentance

Repentance is a subject that is not often preached in many churches today. We often try to excuse sin by calling it a “weakness” or a “problem”, saying that it is a “sickness” or has been inherited (“genetic”). But until we call sin “sin”, we will never truly repent of it, and until we really repent of it, we will never receive forgiveness, cleansing or deliverance from its power.

Repentance is the only way into the Kingdom of God.

The words “repent” and “repentance” occur over 100 times in the Bible. The call to repentance was a frequent occurrence in the messages of the prophets. John the Baptist’s message began with a call to repentance (Matthew 3:2, 8), so did Jesus (Matthew 4:17), so did the early disciples (Mark 6:12; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30). Repentance is *fundamental* to the Gospel message and to salvation. **There is no salvation without repentance and forgiveness!** It is, therefore, God’s will that everyone, everywhere, should repent rather than perish (2 Peter 3:9).

We cannot excuse sin, hide it or deny it; we can only repent of it.

What does it mean to repent?

“Godly grief works unregrettable repentance, leading to salvation; but the grief of the world leads to death” (2 Corinthians 7:10). Godly grief, leading to true repentance and forgiveness, is demonstrated in the life of Peter (Luke 22:31-32, 54-62; John 21:15-19). Worldly sorrow, leading to death, is shown by the life of Judas (Matthew 26:47-57; 27:3-10).

“Repentance” means a genuine sorrow, remorse or grief for sin; a turning away from that sin; changing one’s mind or heart or attitude towards that sin; seeking God’s forgiveness, with a desire and determination not to commit that sin again.

Repentance – deep repentance – is not just being sorry because we have been caught, or because of some of the bad consequences or punishment that results from that sin. Only “Godly grief” can lead to true repentance. In Acts 2:37 the people were “cut to the heart” – that is Godly sorrow.

As individuals, and as a nation, we need a supernatural conviction of sin – the Holy Spirit convicting the world of sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:8-11), leading to deep repentance.

In times of past revivals, the conviction of sin has often been so great that people have been convicted of sin in the streets or in their homes, without anyone preaching to them or witnessing to them. Such conviction, when it leads to Godly sorrow and repentance, produces real conversion and a life that is permanently transformed (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:17). Dare we accept anything less?

While it is the Christian preacher’s task to preach the Truth and the full counsel of God, it is primarily the Holy Spirit’s task, not ours, to convict people of sin. The Truth, preached under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, will do its work (cf. Hebrews 4:12-13) but we must beware that we do not bring people into condemnation by our own judgement of them (cf. Romans 8:1-4).

Repentance is an unpopular word when preached to a resisting heart, but when it is preached in love, in the context of God’s grace, mercy and forgiveness, then it is like water for the thirsty soul, to those who will respond.

Repentance must not be legalistically preached, but taught with compassion, just as Jesus said: “Neither do I condemn you; go, and *sin no more*” (John 8:11).

When repentance is complete and forgiveness is received, a burden is lifted, and this leads to great joy, relief and enthusiasm for the things of God.

National repentance

In the lives of individuals, and in the Church, we have seen a measure of repentance. We have yet to see repentance on a national level – where our nation, recognising its backsliding and sin, through its leaders (both secular and spiritual) repents and turns back to God and *His* ways.

Christian leaders especially need to call our nation to repentance. We need to humble ourselves before God, confess our sins of the past and pray for divine intervention in the affairs of our nation, so that we will follow a new course.

The alternative is judgement. Tragically, so often in history God has had to allow judgement in order to bring a nation to its knees in repentance, because it would not repent in any other way. For example, Nineveh in Jonah 3; and the Israelites under the judges (e.g., Judges 3:7-11). Also, when Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites go, and God sent 10 signs or plagues and judgements against Egypt, until Pharaoh let them go.

Chapters 9 and 10 of Ezra, Nehemiah and Daniel all show the effects of national humbling, repentance and seeking God. God will always forgive under such conditions and turn defeat into victory.

Deuteronomy 28 and Leviticus 26 both declare God's blessings for obedience, the curses of disobedience, and God's willingness to show mercy and forgiveness whenever a nation repents.

The portion of the verse "Be sure your sin will find you out" (read Numbers 32:16-23) is often applied to the individual, but it is just as true of a nation as a whole. "Do not be deceived; God is not mocked. For whatever a man [or nation] sows, that will he also reap. For he who sows to his own flesh will, from the flesh, reap corruption; but he who sows to the Spirit will, from the Spirit, reap eternal life" (Galatians 6:7-8). In many cases, the punishment which we reap is in-built in the sin itself; we cannot avoid it. The "fruit" are the results of what we sow.

Individually, God is calling us to cleanse our lives from all sin. He is calling for a return to righteousness and holiness (holy living). Corporately, He desires that we have righteous, God-fearing leaders who will lead our nation out of the ways of the enemy and back to God.

This does not mean, of course, that everyone will respond, but the righteous laws and commands of God need to be proclaimed to the nation, and the nation as a whole needs to be called back to God through true repentance and confession of sin.

So great is God's love towards us that if we will not heed the gentle call and warnings of His Spirit, He may allow tribulation and judgement to come upon our land in order that people's hearts will be turned back to Himself, for He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

QUESTIONS

1. Illustrate how, with many of our nation's sins, the punishment is inbuilt in the sin itself without God having to intervene by bringing punishment, and thus how we literally "reap what we sow".
 2. Show how the nation of Israel's sins of failing to destroy her enemies, and compromise, resulted in her sins "finding her out" (Numbers 32:16-23)
 3. "The subject of repentance should not be associated with legalism but with grace". Discuss this, and show how it can be done.
 4. How does true repentance affect:
 - (a) the intellect
 - (b) the emotions
 - (c) the will?
 5. How can a nation be brought to repentance? Is divine intervention essential?
 6. Discuss the various aspects of national repentance, as described in chapters 9 and 10 of Ezra, Nehemiah and Daniel.
-