



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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Here is the king you have chosen, for whom you have asked; see, the LORD has set a king over you. If you will fear the LORD and serve Him and heed His voice and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the LORD your God, it will be well. But if you will not heed the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you and your king. (1 Samuel 12:13-15)

PRAYING FOR OUR COUNTRY

God is in control! Ultimately, He is the one who allows leaders to rise up, or to be put down. Nothing is hidden from His eyes. But we need to **pray for**, and **vote for**, those who will do what is right in God's eyes, and therefore bring God's blessing on our land and people.

Pray that God will expose any unrighteousness, and hidden things which are wrong; and that our people will hold fast to what is good, righteous, just and true, bringing a freedom which will not be abused.

Pray that any darkness will be overcome and dispelled by light.

Pray for change in NZ which comes from *within* our hearts and lives –

- That God will pour out the Holy Spirit, convict of sin, wrongdoing, evil ways, godlessness and indifference.
- That God will release the Spirit of prayer within Christians and multiply it, helping us to pray for our nation according to God's will.
- That churches will call their people to prayer, people will respond, and that this will change NZ now and for generations to come.
- That a deep work will be done, bringing lasting beneficial change.
- That we will have a hunger, thirst, passion and desire for the Lord and His Kingdom.
- That God's will shall be done in our country as it is in Heaven.

Pray for a change in our thinking because of a change in our hearts; leading to change within government and society also.

Pray that God will come into our society, and our people will receive Him and His ways (His "commandments" – *which are all best for all of*

us!) instead of everyone doing what is right in their own eyes.

Praying for our new Government

Voting begins on 3 October, until Election Day, Saturday 17 October

- **Pray** for the current campaigning, debates and other discussions about Party policies and plans.
- **Pray** that the Lord will show Christians how to vote, knowing how MPs have voted in the past, Party policies, morals, etc., and what is likely to happen if they get in. Pray that God will open people's eyes to see the implications of voters' (and our) choices.
- **Pray** for a government which will be best for the handling of our Covid situation, our economy, poverty and our society as a whole.
- **Pray** for good government, good legislation, wise decisions and therefore God's blessing.

ELECTIONS and OUTCOMES

- **How you should vote:** That God will lead you as to how you should vote: which Party, your Electorate MP, and two Referendums.
- **Outcome of the Elections,** including the Referendums: That the Election outcome will allow a stable [maybe coalition] government to be formed.
- **Any coalition** that might need to be formed, and between which Parties.
- **Possible reshuffle** of the order of potential List MPs, by each Party.
- **New Cabinet Ministers** and shadow ministers will be appointed after the election.

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REVIVE US AGAIN!

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The Lordship of Christ and Holiness

When revival comes ...

“Who can abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner’s fire ...” (Malachi 3:2). We are to be a holy people, and one of the marks of true revival is a restoration of holiness amongst God’s people, as God convicts them of sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:7-11). “Our God is a consuming fire” (Hebrews 12:29). Sin is exposed and people become aware of the holiness and majesty of God, during times of revival (see Acts 2:43; 5:1-16). In fact, we will all react in one of two ways: either we will praise and worship God, or we will confess our sins, when God comes in this way. Those with clean hearts will worship Him; those without clean hearts will confess to Him! (see Isaiah 6:1-7).

A fear of God will come over people, which will keep them from sin. This involves a deep awe and reverence for God; respect for, and obedience to, His laws; and a real sense of His sovereignty and Lordship. See Exodus 20:18-20; Jeremiah 32:39-40. “The fear of the Lord is the hatred of evil” (Proverbs 8:13). Godly fear leads to obedience (Haggai 1:12).

Backslidden Christians will be restored, unbelievers will be converted, sin will be dealt with at a much deeper level than ever before. There will be great conviction of sin, followed by deep and true repentance, and confession (Psalm 24:3-4; Isaiah 57:15).

When revival comes, vice will decline. In revivals of the past, when God’s holiness has been seen and conviction of sin is great, pubs, brothels, gambling places, theatres, dance halls and evil places closed down through lack of patronage!

In the day of God’s power, when His presence is revealed, there will be an awareness that He is truly “King of kings and Lord of lords” (Revelation 19:16). In fact, if any Christian is ever to reach maturity in Christ, and if any revival is ever to be more than superficial and

transient, there must come a real awakening to, and practical awareness of, the full meaning of the Lordship of Christ and the holiness which is required in the Christian’s life. “Strive ... for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14).

In our personal preparation for revival we need a revelation of the sovereignty and holiness of God. We need to earnestly seek after personal holiness, sanctification, true discipleship – something a lot deeper than most of us realise. This is not just an intellectual acceptance of our “righteousness in Christ”; it is something far more, something which is evidenced by the fruit of transformed Christian lives, a practical outworking of our righteousness in Christ, in our daily lives. And this is neither automatic, nor easy. This is why Hebrews 12:14 says “Strive for holiness ...”

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

Two great themes of the Christian faith, as far as the life of Christ is concerned, are His death and resurrection. In the death of Christ we see the full payment of the penalty or wages for our sin – we see Christ as our Saviour. In the resurrection of Christ we see His victory over death and His exaltation to glory and power (see Philippians 2:9-11); here we see Him as Lord. Thus we have the twin roles of Jesus – our Saviour and Lord.

As in most things, it is important that we maintain a balance between these, as the Bible does. We must never lose sight of the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and all that means to us. But too often we are ready to acknowledge Him as Saviour, without really making Him Lord of our lives.

It is interesting to note that the word “Lord” occurs in the New Testament over 700 times, but the word “Saviour” only occurs 24 times (and in 8 of those times it occurs with the word “Lord”).

God not only wants to save us from our sins, but He also wants to be Lord of our lives – and this is where the test really comes. Who wouldn’t accept God’s forgiveness, so freely offered, if God asked nothing of us? But God demands all! “Whoever would save his life will lose it,”

said Jesus, “but whoever loses (or gives up) his life for My sake, shall find it” (Luke 9:24). Have you lost your life by trying to selfishly keep it for yourself, or have you really found life, by giving it up to God?

The Lordship of Christ

Read Matthew 7:21-23. This may be a difficult passage to interpret, but one thing is certain: calling Christ “Lord” means nothing unless it is accompanied by a life of obedience to Him. No amount of good works, miracles, or anything else can substitute for a life which is totally yielded to, and under the control of, the Holy Spirit. There is a lot of truth in the saying “Lord of all, or not Lord at all!” A soldier is expected to be totally obedient, without question, to his superiors. How much more should we be, to the Lord of Hosts! In Acts 10:14 Peter says “No, Lord”. Now this is a contradiction: if Jesus is Lord, then you cannot say “No” to Him; if you say “No” to Him then He is not your Lord!

“If you confess with your lips that ‘Jesus is Lord’, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead (to an exalted place of Lordship) you will be saved” (see Romans 10:9-13). “No one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except by the Holy Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:3).

What does “Jesus is Lord” imply?

In Paul’s time, every Roman soldier, once a year, had to make an oath of allegiance to imperial Rome and say “Caesar is lord”. To say this meant total allegiance, obedience and surrender to his commands. To say “Jesus is Lord” is to give total allegiance, obedience and surrender to the commands of Christ.

Paul (Titus 1:1), James (1:1), Peter (2 Pet. 1:1) and Jude (1:1) all call themselves servants or slaves of Christ. When we come to Christ, spiritually we are set free – no force can bind us; and yet we also become slaves of Christ! (See 1 Corinthians 7:22). At first this thought may not seem very pleasant – we all want to live for ourselves: “I want to be my own boss and run my own life”. But, strange as it may seem, no one is really free. 2 Peter 2:19 says that those who try to cast off all restraints “promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption”. See also Romans 6:20-22. In other words, we are either slaves of sin or slaves of God. Has Christ set us free from bondage to sin and to the world? If so, then we are free slaves of Christ! A slave – how

terrible? No, how wonderful to freely serve the King of kings!

But a master does not expect partial obedience from his servants; he expects total obedience. Jesus said, “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other” (Luke 16:13). Christ demands total, undivided allegiance. Do you love the Lord? If you say you do, did you know that Jesus said, “If you love Me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15).

Imagine a person volunteering for the army but stating that he would only join on the condition that he did not have to obey all the orders, but could choose whether or not he would obey each one! The army would have no hesitation in giving him the boot! Neither do we have the choice if we are to truly acknowledge Jesus as Lord. It’s all or nothing. We are either “hot or cold”, or else He will spew us out of His mouth (Revelation 3:15-16). There are only two types of servants, as Jesus shows us in Matthew 24:45-51. The faithful and wise servant does his master’s will; the wicked servant is tossed out – he is no servant at all!

Where do we stand in the realm of obedience to the Lordship of Christ?

What is a “slave of Christ”?

The Greek word “*doulos*” means servant, slave or bond-slave. But what does this really mean? Basically, a slave had only one right: the right to obey his master. Too often we Christians want to stand on our rights: “I had the right to answer him back”; “I was within my rights to get even with him”; “I’m not going to let people trample over me!”

No, the slave of Christ has no rights except to lovingly obey and serve his Lord. This means that we have no rights in business, in our homes, in our jobs, in our personal relationships, in the way in which we use our time, money, possessions or talents; in our reputation, or even our life, except to do the will of God. We gladly, joyfully submit to His will!

How terrible? No, how wonderful! How glorious it is to know that our whole life is in the hands of, and under the full control of, a loving God who desires only the best, only His perfect plan, for our lives! **Yes, Lord!**

If we believe that God has all wisdom, that He has all power, and that He loves us with a perfect, everlasting love, then surely His desire is for the very best possible for our lives. God knows best; God wants us to have the best. So gladly I surrender all to Him!

Lip service or true Lordship?

See Mark 10:17-22. When Jesus said “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but God alone”, what did He mean? Was He denying His deity? Certainly not! This man came running to Jesus, knelt before Him and called Him “Good Teacher” [or “Good Lord”]. Outwardly he acknowledged the Lordship and deity of Christ, but inwardly he refused to submit to the authority of Jesus and obey what He said; he would not give his riches to the poor. This is why Jesus said, “Not everyone who says to Me ‘Lord, Lord’ shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the will of My Father” (Matthew 7:21). Do we just say “Lord”, or do we allow Him to fully control our lives and so make Him Lord in practice? Do we give Christ lip-service or true Lordship?

Conclusion

1. Because God loves us with an everlasting love, and because He knows far better than we do, what is best for us, to submit to His Lordship and authority is the most sensible, wonderful and satisfying thing we can ever do. Any choice we make which is not according to His will, is far inferior to what He would have chosen for us. This is why the Psalmist said, “I delight to do Thy will, O Lord” (Psalm 40:8) and why the Bible says that God’s commandments are not grievous to us (1 John 5:3). We should gladly acknowledge Jesus as Lord and delight in God’s will and His commands.

2. God never takes away from us our free will. At any stage we can choose to disobey Him and go our own way. We are not machines in God’s hands; but to choose otherwise can only lead to sin, frustration and a very poor second-best in our lives.

3. We do not necessarily have to give away all our possessions, or give up our job, our friends, or anything else, but we must be willing to, and we must do whatever God shows us is right. We must seek God’s will and then be obedient.

4. Read Isaiah 6:1-9a. Isaiah saw the Lord. He saw Him in all His authority, power and glory. He saw God’s holiness and his own

unworthiness. He confessed his guilt, it was taken away, and his sins were forgiven. In the Christian sense he was converted and knew forgiveness. But the story does not end there at verse 7. In verse 8 the Lord extends the challenge to obedience – not enforced obedience, but willing, loving obedience: “Who shall I send and who will go for us?” In response and obedience to the Lordship of his God, Isaiah says “Here I am, send me!” And the Lord said “Go!”. Let us therefore count the cost (Matthew 16:24-26; Luke 14:25-33) and having discovered the infinite worth and joy of serving the Lord, let us gladly submit to His Lordship in every area of our lives as we press on towards maturity and greater holiness through the redeeming work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

QUESTIONS

1. A person may be a “believer” but not a “disciple”. What is the difference?
2. “When we have a revelation from God that: (a) He loves us with an everlasting, perfect love and so longs for the very best for us; (b) He has all wisdom and so knows what is best for us; (c) He has all power and so is able to bring that about in our lives; then to submit to His Lordship is the most wonderful, sensible thing any Christian could possibly do”. Discuss this statement.
3. “I surrender all ...” What does or should this really mean in the life of a Christian?
4. Why did Moses and Aaron (Numbers 16:22), Paul (Acts 9:4-6), and John (Revelation 1:17) all fall prostrate on their faces before the Lord?
5. “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose” said Jim Elliott, who was martyred in Ecuador. What did he mean?
6. What “rights” does a Christian have?

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- **Challenges** faced by candidates and MPs. Christian MPs returned. New Christian MPs.
- **All incoming MPs**, Cabinet Ministers, Parties and their leaders, that God will grant them all they need to lead well, and to be united in discernment and action.
- **Our new leaders**: MPs and the ultimate leaders in our country, that they will know, understand, discern, have wisdom, have the ability, and **do** what is **best** for all our people.