

## Devoted to Praying for Our Nation

### I. It is right and good that we pray for our nation.

#### A. We need to humble ourselves and pray.

“...if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land.”

2 Chronicles 7:14 (NLT)

#### B. We need to pray for our leaders (especially the leaders we don't like).

“I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf and give thanks for them. Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity. This is good and pleases God our Savior, who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth. For, there is one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus. He gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone. This is the message God gave to the world at just the right time.” 1 Timothy 2:1-5 (NLT)

#### C. We need to pray as if our welfare depends upon it (because it does).

“...work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare.” Jeremiah 29:7 (NLT)

Today we ask:

- Please give us a desire to pray for the needs of others in our nation, not just our own concerns.
- Break our hearts over the things that break your heart, Lord.
- Please guide our national leaders. Give them wise counsel. Remind us to pray for them instead of ridiculing them.
- When we feel overwhelmed by fears or worries, please lift our minds and help us see the truth. Help us find trustworthy sources of information so we can focus on what is right and good and true.
- Please help us live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity so that we can make the most of every opportunity to tell others about Jesus.

### II. We need to thank God for the blessings we enjoy in our country.

#### A. Gratitude is a vital component of personal peace.

“Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)

#### B. Our nation's birthday is a great time to count our blessings and thank the Lord for them.

“Let all that I am praise the Lord; may I never forget the good things he does for me. He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. He redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies. He fills my life with good things.” Psalm 103:2-5 (NLT)

Today we give thanks for:

- our freedom of speech, our freedom to worship, and our ability to vote and choose our leaders.
- our material blessings and high standard of living.
- the amazing diversity of people and cultures in America.
- our natural resources, our national parks, and our incredible infrastructure.
- the strongest military forces in the world to protect us.

### III. We need to surrender our nation's problems to the Lord.

#### A. God can handle gigantic, impossible problems.

“Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.” Jeremiah 32:17 (NIV)

“Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.” Ephesians 3:20 (NLT)

#### B. God wants us to give all of our problems to Him.

“So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.” Hebrews 4:16 (NLT)

“Pour out all your worries and stress upon him *and leave them there*, for he always tenderly cares for you.” 1 Peter 5:7 (TPT)

C. God wants us to keep praying for our country and not give up.

“Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.” Matthew 7:7-12 (NLT)

Today we pray for:

- a safe vaccine for COVID-19 to be found soon and new treatments devised to aid recovery.
- a clear plan to get people back to work, kids back to school, and worshiping in person.
- civil discourse between people and organizations who disagree.
- an end to racism and prejudice in our country.
- spiritual awakening in America.

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### Connect Group Questions

1. Read 2 Chronicles 7:14. What does it look like when God's people humble themselves and pray? Why do you think humbling ourselves is an important part of prayer?
2. As a group, make a list of things you are grateful for as citizens of our country. Spend some time praying together giving thanks for these things.
3. Read Jeremiah 29:7 & 1 Timothy 2:1-6. What difference does it make if we pray for our leaders and our nation? Why is it so tempting to criticize and complain about our leaders on social media? Why does it often seem difficult to pray about the same people/issues/concerns?
4. Discuss the following quotations:

"Wherever the providence of God may dump us down, in a slum, in a shop, in the desert, we have to labor along the line of His direction. Never allow this thought – 'I am of no use where I am,' because you certainly can be of no use where you are not! Wherever He has engineered your circumstances, pray." Oswald Chambers

"We ought to give thanks for all fortune: if it is good, because it is good, if bad, because it works in us patience, humility and the contempt of this world and the hope of our eternal country." C.S. Lewis

"It has seemed to me fit and proper that (the blessings of God) should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American people... And I recommend to them that, while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners, or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty hand to heal the wounds of the nation, and to restore it, as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes, to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility, and union." Abraham Lincoln in his 1863 Thanksgiving Proclamation

5. Spend some time as a group praying for:
  - a safe vaccine for COVID-19 to be found soon and new treatments devised to aid recovery.
  - a clear plan to get people back to work, kids back to school, and worshiping in person.
  - civil discourse between people and organizations who disagree.
  - an end to racism and prejudice in our country.
  - spiritual awakening in America.

"Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you." Jeremiah 32:17 (NIV)