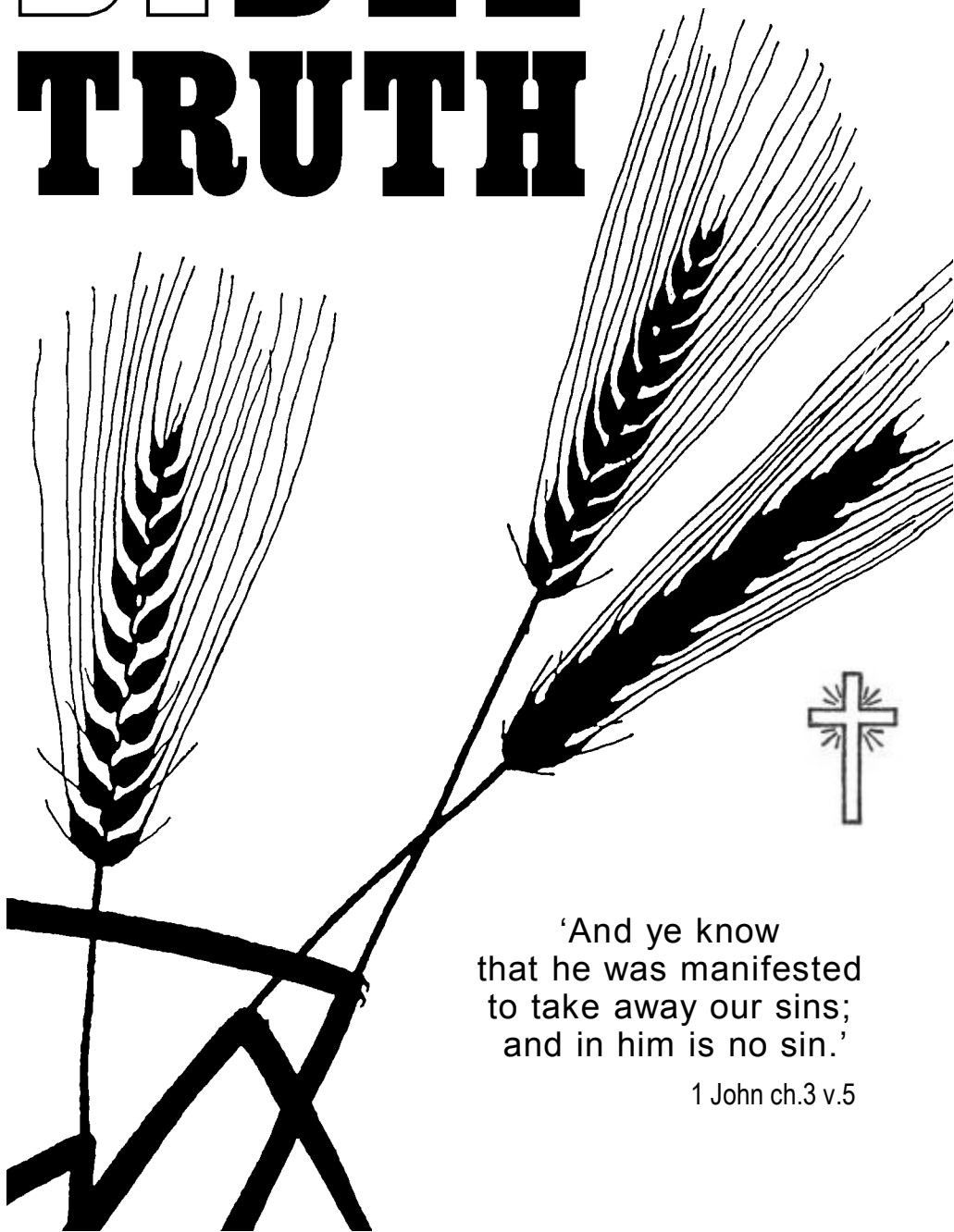


# BIBLE TRUTH

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‘And ye know  
that he was manifested  
to take away our sins;  
and in him is no sin.’

1 John ch.3 v.5

# *¶ Exhort that Prayers be made for Kings*

*by Pastor Karl Schott*

*'I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;'*

1 Timothy ch.2 vv.1-5

Here in these informative and challenging scriptures we have instructions regarding prayer as it relates to kings, governors, presidents, congressmen, senators, mayors, and all those who are placed in positions of authority. Notice that the Apostle Paul does not give a 'suggestion' that we pray for kings and for all men and those in authority, but he says 'I exhort' which is to strongly admonish or urge earnestly.

It is important to note that Paul informs us that the reason we, as Christians, are to make intercessions and prayer for all those listed above is so that we may lead 'a quiet and peaceable life'. To clarify Paul's words he writes that our prayers for rulers are encouraged, or recommended, in order that we, as Christians, may live a tranquil life, free from persecution, ridicule or molestation due to our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is interesting that in recent years Christians are being persecuted in certain parts of the world today, and in America also, certain voices are suggesting that Christianity is contributing to, and is responsible for, problems in and among the people.

It is evident that our circumstances today are quite different from that which the Apostle Paul and the early Christians had to endure. From secular as well as Church history, there is no record to my knowledge, of any king, or other powerful leader being considered a Christian during the time of the apostles. However, since the

Reformation some five hundred years ago, it has not been unusual for kings, as well as presidents (George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and others) to be Christians. They were men who believed in teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ, and obedience to God's laws and commandments as they related to morality and society.

There are often times when most of us, as Christians, find ourselves being critical, instead of praying for those who rule over us, from prime ministers and presidents right down the ladder in the political spectrum. If we, who claim to be Christians, fail to pray for our king, prime minister, governors or mayors, who in these evil times will take on this most important task? It seems to be our natural inclination to criticise them instead of praying for them. May the Lord give us grace to pray as Paul encourages us to do.

As we stop to consider it, we realise that Paul's exhortation is really quite a wonderful thing. First of all, it should help us to come to the realisation, that our God in Heaven is real, and truly does hear and answer our prayers. What a wonderful opportunity that we, in the Lord Jesus Christ have, as prayer warriors, to influence the leadership of our country.

From what we see on TV, and read in our daily newspapers, it is very evident that our Queen, Prime Minister and Parliament are very much in need of the prayers and intercessions of Christians and the Christian church.

Because immorality has increased, many other evils and ungodly activities now sweep over our people, (including those who are in positions of authority and leadership beginning with the highest office in our nation). I am reminded of what took place among Israel's kings some 2600-3000 years ago. Of all the kings who ruled during that time (some 39 kings between Judah and ten tribed Israel) King Manasseh comes to mind. We do not know whether the citizens of ancient Israel prayed for king Manasseh of Judah, but they should have done so. Manasseh was perhaps the most evil and wicked king of all those that ruled over Judah or Israel.

To understand what conditions were like during Manasseh's reign, let us turn to the book of 2 Chronicles.

'Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem: But did that which

was evil in the sight of the LORD, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel. For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.

'And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

'So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel. And the LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken.'

2 Chronicles ch.33 vv.1-3, 6 & 9-10

Now the Lord visited Manasseh and speaking through one of the prophets, encouraged Manasseh to listen to Him. However, king Manasseh refused to hear God's Word and refused to repent, so that the following is recorded.

'Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, And prayed unto him: and he was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God.'

2 Chronicles ch.33 vv.11-13

The Lord brought the armies of Assyria against Jerusalem which was plundered and king Manasseh was taken back to Babylon in chains and thrown in jail. When he found himself in great affliction, he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers.

Evidently the Lord knew when to use drastic measures in order to get Manasseh's attention, as the Lord brought the captains of the host of Assyria against him, he was taken in chains to Babylon. It was only then, when he was suffering that he besought the Lord, his God, in humility.

After spending some time in jail, a great contrast to his former luxurious manner of living as king of Judah, he realised that it was time to seek the Lord, his God. This, perhaps, may have been the first wise move by King Manasseh in a long time. But, praise God, he did finally come to his senses.

Manasseh prayed to God, who was entreated (persuaded) by him, and heard his supplications. As a result, God brought Manasseh again to Jerusalem, and then it is recorded that, 'Manasseh **knew** that the LORD he was God'.

This is an occasion when one of the most wicked kings that had ever ruled over the tribe of Judah was brought to his knees before the Lord God of Israel. The Lord has many ways of getting someone's attention. This is mindful of the words of king Solomon.

'The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.'

Proverbs ch.21 v.1

Is the Lord able to turn the heart of current leaders perhaps, whose moral standards have been brought into question for all the world to know? Will they come to the place of humbling themselves before God in this time of trouble, or in some future trouble that may come their way? We will have to wait and see to know the answer to questions such as this. Meanwhile, are we who are believers in God's Word doing like Paul exhorts us to do, '... that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty'.

Notice that the Apostle Paul does not say that we are to pray that God will bless and prosper those in authority over us. The idea is to pray in a way for them '... that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life ...', it will actually result in our benefit and welfare. It will also help us not to become bitter, angry, or resentful, toward those over whom the Lord has complete control.

We must remember as Paul says that praying for all who are in authority '... is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour'.

I wonder when was the last time that we prayed for such people in authority over us?

With this in mind, I would like to share with you a prayer by the former president of America, Thomas Jefferson, that it may help you know how to pray for them. The emboldened words, may help you in preparing your thoughts for prayer.

## Prayer for the Nation

Almighty God, who has given us this good land for our heritage, we beseech Thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of Thy favour and glad to do Thy will.

Bless our land with honourable industry, sound learning and pure manners.

Save us from violence, discord and confusion; from pride and arrogance and from every evil way.

Defend our liberties and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues.

**Endow with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in Thy name we entrust the authority of the government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that through obedience to Thy law, we may show forth Thy praise among the nations of the earth.**

In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness and in the days of trouble, suffer not our trust in Thee to fail.

*Thomas Jefferson*

We trust that this has been helpful as you consider what your responsibility is toward all those in government, not only those we see who are doing wrong. This is not an attempt to tell you to be passive, as we are to do what we can to make things right, but is meant to be an encouragement to go to God, and trust Him to work in these areas in the lives of those in authority.

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