

Jericho Walls Prayer Guide – April 2009

Wednesday 1 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray for school children to gather at break times and even after school to take time to pray for the upcoming elections and our country. Also pray that students at all tertiary institutions will gather for regular times of prayer, crying out to God for the upcoming elections and our country.

Salvation focus: Language barrier

Only 3% of the world's people speak a language that does not yet have a gospel recording. (*Joshua Project*, website: <http://www.joshuaproject.net/> or e-mail: info@joshuaproject.net). Continue to pray for Scripture to be translated into all the remaining languages within the next 10 years. Ask for God to raise up workers and equip them with understanding and insight to do this very important work.

Thursday 2 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray for Believers in prison to schedule regular times of prayer for the elections, to declare God's Word and promises for spiritual breakthrough all over our country.

Health focus: New tool to diagnose drug-resistant TB

Clinical trials of a new molecular technique have found it to be effective at quickly identifying multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) in resource-poor settings. South Africa's National Health Laboratory Service and *Medical Research Council (MRC)*, and the *Foundation for Innovative Diagnostics (FIND)* collaborated to test 30,000 patients suspected to have MDR-TB in South Africa between 2007 and 2008. It is the first of its kind to be used against TB and the first new tool for TB in 50 years according to acting director of the TB Epidemiology and Intervention Research Unit at the MRC. (Website: <http://www.scidev.net/en/health/tuberculosis/news/powerful-new-tool-to-diagnose-drug-resistant-tb.html>). Give thanks to God for answering prayers for scientific breakthroughs.

Friday 3 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray that cities and towns will call for half-nights and other prayer vigils to pray for the upcoming elections and our country. Ask that churches and Christian ministries will initiate and implement definite and regular times of prayer for the upcoming elections and our country.

Word focus: Book of Hope

In Italy, in spite of boasting a Christian population, very few Italians have a true relationship with Christ. However, a church in Palermo, Italy, is praying that the situation will change as they distribute 2,500 copies of the *Book of Hope*. Since many in the church are teachers, they've introduced the book to the religion teachers. Now many have adopted the *Book of Hope* as the official religion hour book. Pray that many kids will respond to its saving message. (Lars Widerberg, Intercessors Network, Storskiftesgatan 87, S-58334 Linkoping, Sweden. E-mail: Intercessors.Network@Comhem.se or Intercessors.Network@Telia.com).

Saturday 4 April 2009

Youth focus: Teens and children

The South African youth experience double the rate of violence than adults do. Children and youths in South Africa are vulnerable because of the violent communities they live in. They are often victims of violence but they also live with violence, meaning they begin to accept that violence is a way to solve problems. Being involved in recreational activities gives children a sense of hope, purpose and self-esteem, and creates an environment for healthy relationships. (*HEARTLINES*, tel.: 011 771 2540. Website: <http://www.heartlines.org.za> or e-mail:

info@heartlines.org.za). Give thanks to God for many initiatives already running and making a difference. Ask the Lord how you or your church can join in similar activities.

Breast-cancer recurrence risk low after 5 years

Women who survive five years after being diagnosed with breast cancer have a good chance of remaining cancer-free, a new study shows. In the most detailed study of its kind, a new report shows 89% of these women remain disease-free 10 years after diagnosis, and 81 percent are cancer-free after 15 years. (Website: <http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/2008/08/13/20080813breastcancer0813.html?source=nletter>). Give thanks to the Lord for answering and granting significant breakthroughs in specifically breast cancer research. Continue to pray for this tide that is killing women, to be stopped completely within the next 10 years.

Women-2-Pray: Teaching your children to pray

You do not teach a child to pray in one day. It will take times of discussion with them, demonstrations, and practice – letting them do it themselves. Most of all, they learn to pray by hearing you pray. Children do what they see others do. The following are some ideas on how to encourage a lifestyle of prayer in the lives of your children. Teach them to speak to God as if He is real (which He in fact is), and they will be speaking to Him a lot!

1. **Be honest in prayer:** We can teach children to say 'thank you', 'sorry' and 'please' to God in the same way that we teach them to say these things to us. We can help them to learn how to forgive others and very importantly, themselves. It is not always that easy, but it is important for children to know they can be honest with God and tell Him what they find difficult. In this way they learn to ask God to help them *want* to forgive.
2. **Praying in the family:** Family prayer times can be times of stress or joy. Know you will pass through these phases, and do not become discouraged. Pray before meals. Make sure you pray together as a family – all members included – at least once a week. Give everyone a turn to pray, no matter how simple their prayers.
3. **Praying all the time:** When they come to you with a problem, listen carefully. Ask them questions on how they think the situation can be changed for the better. Guide them if they struggle with this. Give them a moment and then tell them to ask God right there and then. It is important that you say a prayer as an example, but it is equally important to let them pray themselves. This way they learn how to pray themselves when facing trouble or difficult situations.
4. **Praying in sickness:** Children believe anything is possible until doubting adults explain to them that it is not! There are no better prayer warriors for the sick than children. Jesus said that we have to come to Him like children. Whenever a member of the household is not feeling well, make a special effort to pray also for one another, so that prayer for the sick will become part of their lifestyle.
5. **Praying can be singing:** Children love to sing. Singing to God is a very important part of prayer. It teaches them to worship God for who He is, and not only for what He can do for them. Make sure you sing a lot to God in the house, whether you sing known worship songs or just spontaneous singing about who God is. It will teach them to sing to God themselves.
6. **Praying while reading:** All small children love books. Ask God how you can capture their attention with the Bible. Make sure you read from the Bible to them on a regular basis. Also take care not to read to them only from children's Bibles, but sometimes from your own Bible. Try to make it applicable to practical situations and then ask them to pray about it.
7. **Do your homework:** See if you can join up with other mothers and form a group of children getting together once a week or from time to time. Take turns to work out a prayer theme for each week, something the children can do together. There are a lot of resources with ideas to teach children on prayer. Make sure you make a special effort to invest in your children's lives.
8. **Pray the Word:** Help them proclaim and pray Scripture over everyday issues. It will work for you too! Here are a few suggestions:

When God feels far away: *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you (Jas.4:8).*

When they struggle to believe God: *Lord, I believe; help me overcome my unbelief! (Mk.9:24).*

When they are afraid: *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind (2 Tim.1:7).*

When they feel discouraged: *Why are you downcast, O my soul? ...Put your hope in God (Ps.42:5).*

Sunday 5 April 2009

Memorise

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit (Ps.34:18).

Identity: Created to love ... with all your heart/soul/mind

Jesus said to him, "you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: "you shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Matt.22:37-39).

Take a look around you: It is difficult to pinpoint exactly the meaning of heart, soul and mind mentioned here, as all three concepts overlap somewhat. The mind makes clear the intentions of the heart. It is the soul that is lifted up to God when it is downcast and emotions cloud it. Some verses add 'strength'. One thing is certain. God wants to make it clear to us that He wants us to worship Him completely and worship Him alone. As a rule the heart constitutes the seat of our emotions; the mind/soul has to do with our will, reasoning or making conscious decisions. These three incorporate everything we think, decide and feel. All of these aspects in mankind have to submit to the ways of God, meaning, we have to think like He does (have the mind of Christ), and with this mind make godly decisions (honouring Him and pleasing Him and staying within His will) and surrendering our emotions (the way we feel) to the truth of God's Word and not our circumstances. This is not an easy commandment to keep!

Take a look inside you: It is not difficult to see how much more we need to surrender to our God! We have to do it on a daily basis and as often as the Holy Spirit leads us and it will be more difficult for the Evil One to get a foothold in our lives.

Take a look at God: Father God, today I take a fresh decision to dedicate my ways to You. Renew my mind to be like the mind of Christ; renew a right spirit within me. Mould me to be like You and follow You in all Your ways, thoughts and emotions.

Monday 6 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray for Christians to pray and live without prejudice, compromise or fear of man for the upcoming elections and the country. Ask that they will remain faithful in prayer and fasting.

Salvation focus: Political leaders

Political leaders have a lot of influence over their followers. Pray specifically for the leadership of all political parties in South Africa. Mention by name those the Lord puts on your heart. Pray for them to have a deep and personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Ask for them to be humble, to walk in integrity, to be true leaders and live and promote godly principles.

Tuesday 7 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray for a renewed awareness of and the fear of God to come upon all South Africans, so all will turn their eyes away from people (princes and kings) and towards God.

Salvation focus: Lake Tanganyika

Please pray for the lost people of Lake Tanganyika (**Jer. 29:10-14a**). Ask that God will fulfil the promises He has for them, plans to prosper them and not to harm them, plans to give them hope and a future. Pray that they will start to seek God with all their heart. Thank God for the advancing of His kingdom. Various churches and groups of people on outreach have taken hands with the missionaries and this has shown God's heart for the lost. Praise God for His mercy and love. (*ProChristo, Good News II Ministry*. Tel.: +26097 719 9322. Website: www.ltprayer.org or e-mail: gnews2@gmail.com).

Wednesday 8 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray for godly men and women to take responsibility to personally pray for the upcoming elections and the country on a daily basis. Pray that they will take responsibility to mobilise and encourage others to begin to pray together for the upcoming elections and our country.

Word focus: Bible film clips available in Asia

Twelve short film clips of dramatised Scripture in a major language of Asia are nearly ready for release to the public. They run from two to seven minutes. They are specially designed to be downloaded from the Internet and passed from one person to another via cell phones. Pray that these "teasers" will draw many people to download the full audio dramatised Bible stories or to view Scripture videos. May those who are seeking God find these resources in their own language and come to know Him personally. (Barry and Kathy Marais. Website: www.wycliffe.net or e-mail: Personnel_Southafrica@wycliffe.org).

Thursday 9 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray that Christians will, with renewed perseverance, continue to cry out to God, proclaim His Name and declare His mighty works over our nation.

Salvation focus: Jewish people

Jewish people commemorate Passover from 9-16 April 2009. During this time they contemplate their deliverance from Egypt. They celebrate the Passover (9th), the feast of unleavened bread (10-16th) and the feast of the First Fruits (11th). Let us pray also at this time that many Jewish people will come to the understanding of what Jesus Christ did at Calvary, and with His resurrection as the first fruit from the dead. Ask that their hearts will be open and receptive to the gospel message across the world. (*Christian Friends of Israel*, e-mail: allwiese@lantic.net. Tel.: 012 361 1437).

Friday 10 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray for the preparation process for the elections, especially for the officials with responsibilities to set up the polling stations. Ask that all of this will be done with integrity and a servant attitude.

Good Friday

Most Christians in the Western world commemorate **Good Friday** today. Please pray for God to touch the hearts and minds of millions of people in South Africa today and to give them a renewed realisation of the awesome gift of Life that they have received. Ask that many would have an understanding of God's grace. Pray that many eyes would be opened and that thousands would turn from darkness to light – and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in Christ. (**Acts 26:18**).

Saturday 11 April 2009

Road safety focus: Highway Ministry Prayer Patrol

Highway Ministry is an interdenominational ministry directed at the trucking and taxi industries, as well as all road users. It is a non-profit organisation with a mission to proclaim the Word to, and establish the love of Jesus Christ

in the hearts of all road users. Pray for this initiative to become thoroughly established and well supported. Ask that it will become a tool to help bring true transformation in the hearts and minds of South African road users. Pray for favour with other role players as the organisation endeavours to connect with and strengthen existing programmes such as *Arrive Alive*. (Highway Ministry. Tel.: 016 349 1996, fax: 086 502 8441 or e-mail: highwaymin@lantic.net).

Children focus: Beautiful Gate Ministries International (BGMI)

An increasing number of ministries are working at grass-roots level to facilitate short-term teams who visit and help improve the circumstances of the lives of children in various places. *BGMI* aims to improve the quality of life of children and families on the African continent. Working in South Africa, Zambia and Lesotho, they partner with other organisations who share their calling, values and principles they do. Pray for the teams of people who visit on a short-term basis with specific skills to equip the communities with what is needed. (*Children at Risk* Prayer News. Websites: <http://www.viva.org/> or <http://www.facesofchildren.net/> or e-mail: pray@viva.org or info@facesofchildren.net. *BGMI* website: <http://www.beautifulgate.org/>).

Sunday 12 April 2009

Memorise

He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: "He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him." Now I have told you (Matt.28:6-7).

Identity: Created to love ... First commandment

Jesus said to him, "you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: "you shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Matt.22:37-39).

Take a look around you: The first commandment – to love the Lord – is explained in more detail in **Exodus 20:1-11**. The Lord feels very strongly about it that we should not serve other gods, neither make images of other gods and serve those, or bow down to them. Furthermore, He wants us to honour His Name and keep the Sabbath. Jesus did not come to take these commandments away, but to fulfil them. Loving the Lord Your God is summarised in the general acceptance that you and I understand the abovementioned to mean just what it says. What God says here is not a suggestion, it is a command, and we will be judged according to this command.

Take a look inside you: Do you honour God's Name? Or do you, even in a 'Christian way' use it without speaking directly to Him? Does the "Oh my God" phrase so widely used, come from your lips too? Do you honour one day a week as a day of dedicated worship unto God for you and your family? Take time again to read through the Ten Commandments, asking God to show you from His heart what it means in practice for you today. The *Ten Commandments* are not *Ten Suggestions*. They are commands to be kept. We will be judged/rewarded in accordance with these commands. Pray about each one of them and change your life to be in accordance with all ten these commandments.

Take a look at God: Father God, forgive me for not honouring your Name in my daily speech, even as a Christian. Make me sensitive to honour you with all my words. Teach me what it means to keep the first commandment in real, practical ways.

Passover Sunday

Most Christians in the Western world commemorate **Passover Sunday** today. The first Passover was held in Egypt by the Israelites. God exempt them from His wrath and judgment when He passed over the land of Egypt to

kill the firstborn of all families. It was their faith that saved them. God said: *and when I see the blood, I will pass over you (Ex. 12:13)*. Now, 2,000 years later, we know Jesus was killed as the final sacrifice for all the sins of all people. Pray that Christians will give thanks to God for giving Jesus Christ to die for us. Pray also for the unsaved to embrace Jesus as the gift of Eternal Life. Today we celebrate God for Jesus Christ as the Faithful Witness, the Firstborn from the dead, and the Ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen! (**Rev.1:5-6**).

Monday 13 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray for Christians to remain positive and be a true blessing to others, even those who do not treat them with respect, blessing those who curse them. Pray for Christians to be living testimonies of God's love and hope to those struggling with fear and despair.

Salvation focus: Policemen and women

Members of the Police are under tremendous stress as they face different conflict situations every day. Many fall prey to threats, bribes and are drawn into unlawful activities of syndicates. Please pray for them all, regardless of position or rank, that they will turn from all illegal practices and make right their wrongs. Ask for many to turn their lives over to Jesus Christ and be faithful in the way they do their work. Pray also for those suffering trauma to find healing and restoration.

Tuesday 14 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray that thousands of people will come to Christ as a result of ongoing prayer for the election and our country. Pray for many testimonies in the media testifying to God's protection and intervention in impossible situations, so as to encourage others to turn their lives over to Him.

Unreached people focus: Vishwa Brahmins of India

Vishwa Brahmins are not currently considered a significant enough population to have political representation in India's government. This creates difficulties for them in spite of their high standing in the social and religious settings of India. There are very few Vishwas who have put their faith in Christ alone. Pray that God would burden the right people to befriend Vishwa Brahmins and show them that the gospel is in fact for them. Ask that Vishwa Brahmins will see the needs in their lives that Hindu beliefs and practices cannot meet. Pray that the Holy Spirit will draw the Vishwa Brahmins to knock, seek and find their Saviour. (*Global Prayer Digest*, e-mail: GPDMOD@wciu.edu).

ARTICLE: How to pray for a childless couple

There are many more childless couples than we think. Such couples find this situation emotionally complex and extremely traumatic, irrespective of whether the problem lies with the man or the woman. Some feel God is punishing them, others that they are not worthy of raising children, that they are failures or that there is sin somewhere in their lives that is preventing God from blessing them. While it is impossible to give answers to all the questions, there are directives that can encourage us to pray for such couples in faith, believing that God answers prayer. The following are guidelines when praying for childless couples:

- Make sure of your relationship with the Lord. Are you in a living relationship with Jesus Christ? First of all, God is interested in your relationship with Him. Everything else flows from that. Don't rush this matter. Make sure.
- Deal with every kind of sin in your life. Don't go looking for sin, but ask the Lord if there is anything that He is not happy with. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you if anything has come between the Lord and you. God does not condemn, He is a God of grace and wants to forgive us and cleanse us from our sins.

- Many childless couples think they have committed some sin or other and for this reason God is punishing them and/or He doesn't want to tell them what they did wrong. Go and think how you see God. Do you see Him as a Father just waiting for you to do something wrong so that He can punish you, or a Father who is unwilling to help you and now you must plead and beg Him to change His mind – that you must overcome His unwillingness through prayer? I would like to advise you both to take time and go and write down what your emotions are around God, how you think about Him or feel about Him. Be honest – God knows what you are thinking and experiencing in any case. Then tell Him and ask Him to bring your thoughts and emotions in line with the way He really is. Do you see Him as a Father of love (real love), who loves unconditionally, a Father who is good, a Father who is gracious and a Father who forgives? This determines how you will pray.
- Pray boldly and ask Him for a child. Believe in God and believe God, which means: "Lord, we ask You for a child. With You nothing is impossible."
- It also means: "Lord, Your will be done. Your ways are not our ways. Whatever You decide is right. We subject ourselves to Your will, but we are also confident when we ask because You are our Father." There could be reasons why God won't allow you to have children, but then you must understand that it is not because God does not like or love you.
- Don't blame each other if nothing happens. Don't allow it to drive a wedge between the two of you. Don't blame yourself if the problem lies with you. Mostly it is more difficult for men to know they are the ones with the "problem". It affects their manliness and often gives rise to a poor self-image and all kinds of conclusions and emotions. Women experience it differently. That is why both of you must try to put these emotions into words and then pray about the matter.
- Live joyfully and hopefully. God is good and God is faithful and God is still almighty even if there is not going to be a baby. Do not allow the devil to rob you of your joy and don't let his condemnation and accusations rule your life.
- Ask the Lord what He wants to tell you about the situation. Listen well. It happens that one is sometimes so set on just asking and wrestling with God that He must give you a baby, that you don't listen carefully what God wants to say about the situation. There may be reasons why things work out like this in your case and it may have nothing to do with sin or unbelief.
- If you or your parents were perhaps involved in occult activities, it would be wise to pray with someone who has enough knowledge of these matters.
- There are ethical limits to our efforts of acquiring a baby. There is for example nothing wrong with adoption. But when it comes to surrogate mothers, the use of the sperm of another man, etc. we are at a point where we are crossing the boundaries of the Scriptures. We must live before God with integrity, morally pure and holy. This is God's intention with the Bible. This comment is not meant to be judgmental, but to caution and give guidance.
- Guidelines for people praying for childless couples: It is important that people praying for such couples will not be judgmental in their prayers, for example imply that the couple does not pray in faith or that there is sin in their lives. Don't act as if you have the answer. Rather listen and show unconditional love and be compassionate. Pray that if the couple goes for medical help that the doctors will make the correct diagnoses and treat such couples with integrity, and that the Lord will use the doctors to be of help.

Wednesday 15 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray for polling day, that there will not be any spoiled ballot papers and that all ballot boxes will be safely transported for the votes to be counted.

Word focus: Caucasus translation project

Throughout history, the Caucasus region has been a crossroad of civilisations, and it now contains one of the highest concentrations of languages anywhere in the former Soviet Union. It is vital that the Word become available in these local languages if it is to speak clearly to people's hearts. A small team is hoping to begin a

Bible translation project in one of these languages. Pray that the team can identify gifted, motivated mother-tongue speakers to train as translators. Pray too that the team can resolve the important question of which dialect of the language to use for the translation. (Barry and Kathy Marais. Website: www.wycliffe.net or e-mail: Personnel.Southafrica@wycliffe.org).

Thursday 16 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray for those who are involved in syndicates, that they will be able to get out of these syndicates without fearing for their lives. Pray for those involved in drug networks, that they will be set free and for these networks to be exposed and effectively shut down.

Prayer focus: Jericho Walls International Prayer Network

Please pray today for each volunteer working at the different offices of *Jericho Walls Prayer Network* across the country. Give thanks to God for protecting, strengthening and providing in every practical and physical need. Please pray for upcoming prayer projects focusing on the *Global Day of Prayer* and for favour with many people to become involved in 24-7 prayer country-wide. Also continue to pray for the printing and posting process of the *Jericho Walls Daily Prayer Guide*. (*Jericho Walls International Prayer Network*, Private bag X22, Lynnwood Ridge, 0040. Tel.: 012 365 3213, fax: 012 365 3214. Website: <http://www.jwipn.com> or e-mail: info@jwipn.com).

Salvation focus: Adopt a terrorist in prayer

The war on terrorism is primarily spiritual. It must be fought with spiritual resources. One side features a militant form of Islam. It seeks death for converts who leave Islam and kills anyone who insults Mohammed. The other side promotes freedom of thought and expression. Fear is the primary weapon against this freedom, and terrorists are Satan's primary tool. If terrorists start converting, then terrorism as a weapon will fail, and the whole world will know something spectacular about the one true God. Where is the effective and unified Christian response to terrorism? The answer is prayer. Consider to adopt a terrorist for prayer. (Website: <http://www.atfp.org/>).

Friday 17 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray for all those involved in illegal practices, to realise their folly and stop doing these things. Pray that all illegal practices, syndicates and drug networks will be exposed, and effectively stopped and shut down. Pray for the issuing of identity books to be handled in the correct way. Pray for the registration process of South African citizens living abroad.

Children's focus: Bethany Children's Trust (BCT)

BCT is also making a major impact through creative ideas and providing real solutions to felt needs. Partnering with projects in Zambia, Uganda, Rwanda and Togo they work in the areas of conflict, disability, HIV/AIDS and street children, and like to work with projects that have the potential to be replicated across a region or country. Please pray for the impact of this organisation. That the training they provide and the way they equip people will be multiplied beyond human expectations. (*Children at Risk* Prayer News. Websites: <http://www.viva.org/> or <http://www.facesofchildren.net/> or e-mail: pray@viva.org or info@facesofchildren.net. BCT website: <http://www.bethanychildrenstrust.org.uk/>).

Saturday 18 April 2009

Gospel focus: Passion Play

Passion Play Ministries of Cape Town will be staging their annual performance of "He's Alive" at the Bellville Civic Centre from 18-26 April 2009. They are part of the *International Ministry* which reaches 140,000 people each year on three different continents (Africa, Asia and USA). (*Passion Play of Cape Town*. Tel: 084 769 7350 or 072 585 2913. Website: www.passionplay.org.za). Give thanks to the Lord for this initiative. Ask for many lives to be touched, changed and restored through this ministry.

Substance abuse focus: Weekend of prayer and fasting

This weekend marks the 19th Annual "Just Pray NO!" to drugs *Worldwide Weekend of Prayer and Fasting* initiative. Substance abuse has been directly linked to violence and sexual immorality and is a major source of income for organised crime and terrorist activities. Pray that the addicted will seek after God with all of their heart, soul, mind and strength (**Deut.4:29**) and will place their trust in Jesus Christ as both Saviour and Lord. Pray that those who are enslaved to carnal desires will be set free. (Website: <http://www.justprayno.org/>).

Sunday 19 April 2009

Memorise

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away (Lk.21:33).

Identity: Created to love ... your neighbour as yourself

*Jesus said to him, "you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: "you shall love your neighbour as yourself" (**Matt.22:37-39**).*

Take a look around you: God is love. So the focal point of the two greatest commandments He gave people is the command to love. As important as it is to Him that we should love Him, He invites us, through our actions and daily life, to love also our neighbours. This means all those around us, whether they are friends, family or not. To understand the detail of what is meant here, we can turn to **Exodus 20:12-17**. Honour your parents – no buts. Do not murder, commit adultery, do not steal or give false witness, do not yearn for what is not yours. Jesus' coming adds to the seriousness of the law of old. He says in **Matthew 5:28**, you shall not commit adultery, but I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. It is what happens in our hearts that determines how we obey this commandment.

Take a look inside you: Be honest with yourself. All of us struggle in one way or another in this area. Our thought life is the beginning of all evil intent. Sin is the matured version of that which begins in the heart. Ask God to show you His thoughts about the condition of your heart. Decide to deal with the condition of your heart on a daily basis, so that you may avoid falling into sin.

Take a look at God: Father, I give you my heart. Please cleanse my heart from so much wickedness that I see in me, even the things I am unaware of. Purify my heart and renew my mind, not only towards You but also towards my neighbour.

Monday 20 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray for polling day, that there will be peace in the hearts of people coming to vote, and that no acts of violence will take place. Ask that people will not be discouraged or hindered to vote, also that ballot boxes will not be tampered with.

Salvation focus: Prison guards

Prison guards are under continuous temptation get involved in schemes of inmates, spurred on by the promise of making money. In so doing they compromise their responsibility. Ask the Holy Spirit to convict them of sin so they will correct their wrongdoings. Pray for them for courage to take their position as Christians. Ask for many to come to Jesus.

Missions focus: Thailand

South African missionaries to Thailand write: As a family we are thankful to God who enabled us to finish our second four-year term serving Him in Thailand. We arrived in SA on 28 September 2008, for one year furlough after which we will return to Thailand. Our daughter Azaria is responding well to the chemotherapy she is receiving

now. Thank you very much for your continual prayers. (Joseph and Edwina Charles, Leonhof 20, Sydney Street, Bellville 7530. Cell: 072 941 5628. E-mail: jecharles2003@yahoo.com).

Tuesday 21 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray for polling day, that there will be enough ballot papers at all polling stations. Ask for peace between the voters and the members of the *Independent Electoral Committee*.

Gospel focus: *Trans World Radio (TWR)*

TWR produces and broadcasts radio programs in more than 225 languages around the world. Pray for *Farming God's Way*, a radio program designed to show farmers how to turn their land into profitable crops through management and environmental stewardship. This program shows how God's ways apply to all people, not just farmers, and will be produced in many African languages. Pray for God's provision for translations, productions and airtime. (*Trans World Radio Africa*. P.O. Box 4232, Kempton Park, 1620. Tel.: 011 974 2885).

Wednesday 22 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray for polling day, that no riots or fighting will take the lives of people or lead to the destruction of property. Cry out for God's mercy and grace.

Gospel focus: *Every Home for Christ Anglo Africa (EHCAA)*

EHCAA, partnering with the *Disciple Nations Alliance*, is committed to serving the Church in restoring God's glorious vision for the nations, to help the Church put on a biblical world-view and live it. Also to help the Church practise ministry that provides tangible demonstrations of Christ's love to broken people. (Contact: Hein van Wyk, *EHCAA/Hope for Africa*, P.O. Box 9463, Centurion, 0046. Tel.: 012 665 0343, fax: 012 665 0381, cell: 082 349 8465. Website: <http://www.ehcaa.co.za> or e-mail: hein@ehcaa.co.za). Please pray for ministries like these, that they will be effective in their work and efforts. Ask for a hunger and a thirst after the Word of God and that crying out to Him night and day will form the foundation of all their exploits.

Thursday 23 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray for the counting of the votes to take place without manipulation or any tampering. Ask that until results are made known, Christians will continue to pray for God's mercy upon our country.

Children's focus: *Website against child pornography*

The *Film and Publication Board (FPB)* has launched the *Pro-Child* website aimed at eliminating child pornography in South Africa. Through the "Internet hotline" the *Pro-Child* website provides the opportunity for members of the public to report and expose incidences of child sexual abuse images found on the Internet. (Website: http://www.sangonet.org.za/portal/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=9732&Itemid=1). Give thanks to the Lord for initiatives like these. Pray that they will be successful, not only in reporting incidences, but also in prosecuting paedophiles and child molesters in South Africa.

Friday 24 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray that as election results are being made known, God will grant us peace in our country and that leaders will not be guilty of saying things that may cause violence or an outbreak of war.

The Mighty Men Conference

The Mighty Men Conference will again take place from 24-26 April, 2009 at Shalom. The theme this year is from **Galatians 4:28**: *We are the children of promise*. Please pray for the start of the conference today. Ask for many men to turn their lives over to God during this time. Pray that this conference will mark the beginning of a great

cleansing of our people and land. (*Shalom Ministries*, P.O. Box 373, Greytown, 3250. Tel.: 033 417 1695, fax: 033 417 1425. Website: www.shalomtrust.co.za or e-mail: shalom@futuregtn.co.za).

Focus on Israel: To be gathered unto the Lord

Jesus had this desire for Israel to be gathered unto Him like a hen's chicks are gathered under her wings, but Israel was not willing. In the years following Jesus' ascension, Israel would be scattered among the nations and His promise was that they would not see Him again until they said: *Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord (Ps.118:26)*; in other words, recognising Jesus as the Messiah (**Lk.13:34-35**). Since the re-establishment of the modern state of Israel, 3.3 million Jews have returned to Israel from at least 120 nations across the world. *We ask with all of our heart, that as they return to Jerusalem, to the hill of Salvation, that indeed they will return in their hearts to the One who came in the Name of the Lord. Open their spiritual eyes and ears to see and hear and understand that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life of the God of their forefathers.*

Youth-2-Pray: When my friends face Anorexia

Anorexia is a serious and potentially life threatening disorder. The exact cause is unknown, but it is believed that a number of factors including emotional, physical and behavioural issues contribute to this disorder.

When we think about how to pray for them, we do not want to preach or pretend that we are experts. This is a sensitive issue that causes much pain and distress, both for parents, friends and those suffering from anorexia. What is important is that you should love them and pray for them. The following are some thoughts you can share with your friends on how to pray and care for people suffering from anorexia. Your prayers will make a difference, because God answers prayer.

- **Dysfunctional families:** People who suffer from anorexia often live in dysfunctional families. Sometimes the relationships in a family may lead to young people falling into the anorexia trap, especially if the father and/or mother are very domineering and/or over-protective. The child may see it as a form of control and feel there is no freedom to make his/her own decisions. Another problem is also that there is sometimes a lack of open and honest communication in the family circle. Pray and ask the Lord to show the family if there is anything in the family set-up that can cause anorexia. Pray that there will not be denial and that the parents will not take offence, but that they will be willing to work on it and if necessary, go for counselling.
- **False sense of control:** Sometimes young people may feel that they are not acknowledged for who they are and what they are capable of, and their talents are not recognised either. There is often a strong urge to control. They want to gain a measure of 'control' of their lives, even if it is just showing that they are capable of doing something on their own, like deciding on their own eating patterns. Pray that young people will see the folly of thinking like this and that they will be willing to surrender their lives to Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit to set them free so that they can experience total liberty and acceptance.
- **Surrender:** Pray that they will understand that God is in control of everything and that they can relax. When God is in control, there is no rejection, there is no need to perform or earn acceptance. We are free to be ourselves.
- **Identity crisis:** Anorexia sufferers often struggle with an identity crisis and have a totally wrong perception of their worth and especially their own bodies. Some of them hate their bodies for different reasons and feel they can rectify it by radically changing their eating habits. Pray that they will find their identity in Christ and be able to see themselves as God sees them. Ask that they will understand that God loves them unconditionally, that He made them and is proud of them.
- **Rejection issues:** Some of them fear rejection and feel that if they can lose weight, they will be more acceptable to other people. Pray that they will experience the love and acceptance of friends and family and also the acceptance of God. Ask that they will understand that God values them and believes in them because He made them and has good plans for them (**Jeremiah 29:11-14**).

- **Respected as a person:** All people have at least two basic needs: to feel loved (versus rejection) and that they are valued, can contribute something, which means they need to feel needed. Ask the Lord to show young people through the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives, that they are loved, that they are important and that they are needed. Ask that others will help those suffering from anorexia by treating them with respect, and in a way that will make them feel needed and loved.
- **Distorted view of self:** Anorexia sufferers are often afraid of social interaction, have low self-esteem, and therefore feel uncomfortable to eat in front of other people. They are also often perfectionists and hyper-tidy. Eventually they withdraw, and the true picture of who they really are becomes distorted. They begin to feel that people reject them and that this is the reason why they feel so uncomfortable. A combination of all these things leads to a distorted view of themselves. Pray for all lies and deception about whom they are in Christ to be exposed and that they will be set free. Lies and ignorance bind us, but the truth sets us free.
- **Courage to face the truth:** Ask the Lord to work willingness in the hearts of anorexia sufferers to admit to their problem and to go for help.
- **Distorted view of happiness:** They are mostly in denial about the fact that they are underweight. They feel that happiness is undeserved and there is a striving for perfection. Pray that they will see that God created them to have life and to have it abundantly (**John 10:10**).
- **Cover with prayer:** When you pray for them, remember to resist in Jesus' Name the spirit of death, deception and destruction (**James 4:7**).
- **Embraced by friends and family:** Most importantly, accept them as human beings. Do not be angry with them and do not judge them. Pray that their family and friends will also treat them like this.
- **Remain standing:** Pray with hope, with faith. Read the Word and pray God's promises of hope and life over them as often as the Holy Spirit reminds you.

Saturday 25 April 2009

Health focus: The mosquito recession

South Africa was one of the first countries in the world to introduce the (rapid diagnostic test) RDT's to diagnose malaria in patients and it was also one of the first countries to change its first line treatment of uncomplicated malaria to (artemisinin-based combination therapies) ACT's. (Website: <http://business.africa.com/opinion/1088700.htm>). Thank the Lord for blessing our country as a beacon of light to other nations and answering prayer for the treatment of malaria. Pray that many will benefit from this research.

Illiteracy focus: Women worldwide

About 2/3 of the world's 876 million illiterates are women and the number is not expected to decrease significantly in the next 20 years. (Website: <http://tahirih.org/tahirih/howtohelp/assets/Statistics%20on%20Women%20Worldwide.doc>). Continue to pray about the plight of women worldwide and that effective measures would be taken to turn the situation around. Ask for these women and also the children to be able to hear the gospel and listen to the Bible. Pray for many to be supernaturally enabled to read their Bibles.

Sunday 26 April 2009

Memorise

The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever (Isa.40:8).

Identity: Created to love ... for God preserves the faithful lover

Oh, love the Lord, all you His saints! For the Lord preserves the faithful, and fully repays the proud person (Ps. 31:23 NKJV).

Take a look around you: The most surprising thing about being a child of God is that we do not have to 'do' anything to earn God's love. Yet people still want to be or do something to show that they are 'better' so they will at least feel God likes them more. Yet this is not an issue with God. He loves you – period. But He does ALSO preserve those who are faithful. The *New Living Translation* says it in simple language: For the Lord protects those who are loyal to him, but he harshly punishes all who are arrogant. Nothing you can do or accomplish will ever impress God. He is impressed with you because He made you, because His love is unconditional. You are His child and you do not have to do anything to earn this privilege, or to be loved.

Take a look inside you: Do you feel you need to earn God's favour or love? Why do you think that is true of you? Do you think God is protecting you because you are loyal to Him? What is your perception of being loyal to God? Is there arrogance in your life?

Take a look at God: Father, forgive me for misjudging You and Your ways. Thank you for always loving me unconditionally. Thank you for teaching me that You also protect me. I love You wholeheartedly and honour You.

Monday 27 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray that as results are being made known, there will be no manipulation and that the results will be a reflection of the real situation. Ask that people will restrain themselves and not attack others, or go on the rampage and destroy property.

Gospel focus: India

International gospel radio network *Trans World Radio (TWR)* has doubled the goal it set earlier this year to distribute 2,000 radios to Believers in India. The enthusiastic response to their campaign has allowed them to send 4,000 radios that can be used by their owners to hear the gospel. (Website: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/thousands.of.new.radios.let.indias.believers.hear.gospel.message/21175.htm>). Give thanks to the Lord for this answer to prayer! Continue to pray for new Believers to grow and mature.

Tuesday 28 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: As results are made known, ask that people will not despair and take irresponsible actions or make irrational decisions. Pray that Christians will not stop praying after the election results are made known.

Sanctity of life focus: Abortion remains illegal in Brazil

Two bills to decriminalise abortion in Brazil were defeated for the third time, in what may be the final blow to legislation that has been under consideration for over 17 years in the *Brazilian National Congress*. The majority of Brazilians are more opposed than ever to decriminalising abortion. After a year in which a nationwide pro-life campaign was launched, Brazilians opposed to decriminalising abortion rose from 63% to 68%. (*Breaking Christian News*, e-mail: editor@breakingchristiannews.com). Give thanks to the Lord for this breakthrough in Brazil. Ask for many other nations to be encouraged by this news and pursue the same matters in prayer and fasting in their countries. Pray also that abortion will never be legalised in Brazil.

Wednesday 29 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray that new prayer groups that were formed the past 4 months will continue to meet for prayer on a regular basis. Ask that the number of prayer groups formed the past 4 months among Christian leaders will now multiply in number and intensity to pray for the restoration of our country.

Famine focus: Burma

The Arakan *Free Burma Rangers (FBR)* team has reported widespread famine in this area of western Burma. The price of rice in the Arakan State has jumped from 140 to 870 kyats per kilogram in the last year. This is partly due

to widespread destruction of crops the previous year caused by an influx of rats. Schools have had to shut down and farmers have been forced to abandon their worthless farms to search for food. Thousands of people are starving. (*Free Burma Rangers*, website: www.freeburmarangers.org). Cry out to the Lord to turn this tide, not only in Burma, but in every other country suffering the same conditions.

ARTICLE: Commitment vs. Surrender

The word commitment is in essence not a biblical concept. It is more or less since the 1960's that Christian writers and preachers began to use the word. Today people are asked to make a *commitment* to follow Christ, to commit to go to the mission field, to give financially, to pray for a certain issue.

The word commit means: promised devotion, to pledge devotion or dedication to somebody or something; to be committed to, to entrust something or somebody to somebody else for protection.

The loophole with commitment though, is that we can still decide **what and how much** we want to commit. The decision still lies with us. We are still in control. It is more of a humanistic concept than a Christian concept.

Scripture speaks of **surrender**, not commitment. The definition of surrender is: to give up possession of something: to relinquish possession or control of something, unconditional submission, abandonment of legal rights, an act of willing submission to authority, capitulation, renunciation, to hand over, to give up a fight, an act of declaring defeat at the hands of an opponent.

Let us surrender to God. Let us give up our rights. When we surrender to God, it is not for us to decide what we want to do with our lives, possessions and future. It is only in surrender that God can do with us what He wants to do. Surrender is unconditional commitment. It goes against the grain of the era of humanism. It is in total surrender that we can really pray: "Your will be done." It is through total surrender that we get out of the way so that God can work in and through us or even set us aside to work through someone else to do what needs to be done.

Surrender is an absolute **act of faith**, saying: "Lord I trust you." Praying from a position of surrender, not commitment, allows God to work far above and beyond what we can think or imagine. One of the biggest differences between commitment and surrender is the fact that in commitment things depend on me. In surrender I give all to God. I will fail, but He will never fail. Commitment without surrender is often trying to do what only God can do through me when I surrender to Him.

Commitment comes after surrender. After our unconditional commitment (surrender), we follow through on our commitment, whatever the cost. Sooner or later the Christian life comes to a place where there is a price to be paid. It is here where commitment carries us through, irrespective of our circumstances, lack of faith and strength or unwillingness. We can commit ourselves for instance to do a certain piece of work. As soon as other pressures come, we might feel that we simply cannot do it. This is where unconditional commitment comes in: I keep my commitment, irrespective of the circumstances.

We will often sense that God is asking us to do something. After prayer and consultation, we feel that we need to do it. We put our hand to the plough and start. But then all sorts of difficulties arise and we feel that we cannot go on. Suddenly we start finding excuses: perhaps God didn't speak to me about this issue or maybe it is time to hand this over to someone else. Too many times I hear people say, "You know, God is using me to start things and then move on." I am not convinced that this is true in every situation. The easiest thing to do is to start something. If nothing comes of what I started, I can blame other people for not being faithful or not listening when God speaks to them. Too often the problem is in fact a lack of commitment to finish the work. So many times there is pride in the fact that we have been involved in starting something because then we can say, "You know, I was

actually the one who started it." Do not start something if you aren't committed to finish it. We have too many sprinters in the Kingdom of God, but there are not enough long distance runners willing to complete the marathon. The Christian race is a marathon. God's marathon requires training, unconditional commitment and for you to surrender to Him.

Thursday 30 April 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray for the appointment of new members of parliament, that God will grant us grace for godly men and women to take up these responsible positions of authority. Pray for the inauguration of the new President, that his heart will truly belong to God and that he will fulfil His purposes only.

Salvation focus: Brunei

Muslims in Brunei aim for a 'pure' Islamic state by 2020. The king is reputed to be the world's wealthiest man. Pray for conversions to Christ in the large royal family. Pray also for political liberalisation in the country. Pray that Brunei Malays, from the Sultan and his family, all the way down through every strata of Brunei society, will hunger for spiritual truth and peace with God, and discover it through reading the Scriptures; listening to Christian broadcasts etc. Pray that thousands and thousands of Brunei Malays will open up to receive and acknowledge Jesus Christ into their lives. (*Operation World*, p.126, website: <http://www.operationworld.org> or e-mail: info@operationworld.org).

Friday 1 May 2009

Election 2009 focus: Pray for the inauguration of all new members of parliament to take place without delay and for God to supernaturally reveal Himself to them so they will choose Christ as their all in all. Pray for the appointment of people in leadership positions on both national and regional level, that God will give us grace for men and women walking in integrity to take up these positions, and that they will do so soon.

Labour focus: Worker's Day

Many countries around the world commemorate the contribution made by workers to society on *May Day*. (Some countries do not celebrate this holiday because of its communist origins). This has traditionally been a day to protest against low wages and poor working conditions. (Website: <http://africanhistory.about.com/library/bl/blsaholidays.htm>). Please pray for God's grace on our nation today. Cry out to Him for a revelation of His holiness. Ask that many will realise their need of God. Pray for peace in our country and that no lives will be lost during celebrations today.

Saturday 2 May 2009

Election 2009 focus: Give thanks to the Lord for answering so many prayers over the past months concerning the elections and our country. Give thanks and praise to His Name for every soul saved, for every heart touched and for blessing us. Give thanks to the Lord for not judging us according to our sins, transgressions and iniquities. Give thanks to the Lord who upholds us and picks us up when we fall.

Prayer focus: Global Day of Prayer & 24-7 prayer

Excellent video material telling the story of 24-7 prayer worldwide has been distributed across the globe in many languages the past 2 years. The response in terms of feedback, encouragement and new watches being planted is very special. Please continue to pray for this video material to be distributed and duplicated into more languages across the world. Ask for many Christians to be encouraged and start praying for breakthroughs in their own communities.

Sunday 3 May 2009

Memorise

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty (Ps.91:1).

Identity: Created to love ... for God delivers those who love Him

You who love the Lord, hate evil! He preserves the souls of His saints; He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked (Ps.97:10 NKJV).

Take a look around you: The devil has got so many Christians believing so many lies! If only we knew and really believed what Scripture says! If you love God, you do not have to try to avoid doing what is wrong and staying out of trouble. You and I will be so busy seeking and searching out ways to please and show God how much we love Him, we would have no time to waste avoiding what is wrong! The problem with sin is though, that it is presented as very desirable! Once we fall in love with loving God, we really begin to hate evil. We do not want to do what is wrong, since it separates us from pleasing God alone. God is clear about this. He will deliver those who love Him from the hand of the wicked. It does not say the wicked will never bother you – it says, God will deliver you from the hand of the wicked. As simple as that, but, you have to love God and hate evil.

Take a look inside you: Do you struggle to do the right thing? Do you find it hard to resist temptation? Many Christians struggle with this. Yet, you can ask God to help change your mind completely and trust His Word in a whole new way.

Take a look at God: Father God, forgive me for judging You according to my way of thinking and for not knowing the liberating truths from Your Word. Please renew my mind. Give me a hunger and thirst to know, love and follow You wholeheartedly.

Monday 4 May 2009

Salvation focus: Cleaners

Thousands of South Africans are employed as part of cleaning services, as house maids, industrial, municipal, hotel cleaners etc. It is not a highly paid job, yet it plays an important role in sustaining basic hygiene and a healthy environment, and is one of the fundamental support systems in the nation. Pray that God will reveal Himself to these people. Ask that they will be faithful in performing their duties with excellence. Also pray for Christian cleaners to witness of Jesus' love to other cleaners and places where they work, and to treat them with respect. Pray also that their wages will be fair.

Prayer focus: Global Day of Prayer & 24-7 prayer

Continue to pray for the translation of video material on 24-7 prayer into more languages. Also ask God to stir the hearts of church leaders, business, political and other leaders with hope to encourage people in their sphere of influence, so that they will begin to pray for breakthroughs and change in difficult situations.