

# How to Pray for the World

TIPS&TOOLS  
Ideas to Stimulate Prayer



How can we pray for the world? To wrap our hearts and heads around the whole world—that's too big!

Yet Paul writes, "I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people" (1 Tim. 2:1, italics added). And Psalm 67:1–2 gives us the ultimate reason to pray for God's grace and mercy in our world: "So that [God's] ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations."

One way to pray for the world is to watch or read the news with God, and then pray over the news. When you view the news from God's perspective, you may weep in sorrow. You may become angry over injustice. You may feel compassion for people facing tragic circumstances.

Bob Pierce understood this when he wrote, "Let my heart be broken with the things that break the heart of God." If you keep your heart sensitive, you can pray for the situation and people the way God wants you to pray.

When I think of national or global situations, I remind myself that "those" people are just like me. They have the same needs and thoughts and feelings as me. They are asking the same questions of life I ask. They wrestle with the same fears and struggles I face. Remembering that, I can identify with their plight better.

Though they may live in a different culture, speak a different language, come from a different ethnic background, or think of life very differently than I do, we all share our humanity

equally from the one Creator God. If I grew up where they grew up in the life circumstances they encountered, and with the education they received, I would probably think and act like them. And God loves them.

I also think of Christ's Church, which is not typically featured in the news. As I wonder what God is doing in building His Church from every nation, tribe, people, and language, I pray for God's Kingdom to come in His Church and among His people. Eternal values are more important than temporal needs, yet meeting temporal needs can lead people to embrace eternal values.

In praying for the world in the news, here are some prayer points:

- for salvation, healing, provision, wisdom
- for peace in the current situation
- for sin patterns to be broken
- for the welfare of believers
- for believers to speak out boldly for Christ
- for the freedom of the gospel
- for humane and just leaders
- for justice and freedom
- for the glory of God to be revealed
- for people to be redeemed
- for the growth of the Church.

The Bible tells us to pray, and the news tells us what to pray for!

DAVID J. SMITH is senior pastor at Queens Christian Alliance Church in New York City.