

Praying God's Purposes for America

Using the Scriptures to Pray for a Nation

By Dave and Kim Butts

Do you long to see God work in a healing and restoring way in our nation? As the chairman of America's National Prayer Committee, I (Dave) intersect with prayer leaders across our nation. Our hearts are growing increasingly urgent about the need to pray for God's mercy and grace in our country

As my wife Kim and I prayed over and discussed this article together, we had questions. How do we pray for America? What can we ask of God, given the history of our nation, the ways we are currently grieving God, and the many ways God has blessed us both today and in the past? Suddenly I felt led to pray.

This is the simple prayer that the Lord put on my heart. If it resonates with your heart, I invite you to join me in praying for America in this way:

Lord,

How would You have me pray for my nation? I watch with horror as we increasingly turn from Your ways. Your precious Word speaks so strongly to our situation: "The wicked freely strut about when what is vile is honored among men" (Ps. 12:8).

The Psalmist David again asks the right question for our day, "When the foundations are being destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Ps. 11:3).

It is because I love the United States of America that I pray with passion for her. Lord, You have greatly blessed our nation. From our beginning, there have been those in leadership who have honored You and sought to lead us in righteousness. You have made us a beacon for freedom around the world for those who are oppressed and downtrodden. The material blessings from Your hand have welled up in national generosity to help those who are hurting, both within and outside our borders.

We recognize our imperfect human nature and structures. While fighting for freedom, we had periods of slavery within our own nation. Even with slavery behind us, freedom was not always available to all in the same measure. The list of our sins, Lord, is long. Without Your mercy, who could stand?

Throughout our nation's history You have blessed us with times of spiritual awakening and revival. Your Spirit moved in our midst to restore godly worship. You empowered Your people to be witnesses to Your truths and to take stands for righteousness and justice.

Oh God, do it again! Come upon Your people again in reviving power. Before our nation can be changed, our hearts must be changed. Turn us from selfishness and sin to Your loving ways.

Your Word tells us, Lord, that judgment begins in the house of the Lord (1 Peter 4:17). May Your mercy and grace also begin there. Pour out a spirit of repentance upon the Church in America. Forgive us for making our faith more about us and our comfort and preferences than about Your purposes on planet earth. Fill our pulpits with godly preachers who will proclaim Your Word fearlessly.

We will respond to Your Word as those who are called by Your name, humbling ourselves before You and in prayer, seeking Your face and turning from our wicked ways. Father, will You then hear from heaven and forgive our sin and heal our land (2 Chron. 7:14)?

We ask this in the powerful name of Jesus! Amen.

Praying Scripture for Our Nation

Praying for any nation requires that we lay down our desires and take up God's desires for that nation. In addition to praying those things that God puts on our hearts, we also need to learn to pray Scripture over a nation. Here is a powerful Scripture to pray on behalf of our nation:

Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people he chose for his inheritance. From heaven the Lord looks down and sees all mankind; from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth—he who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do.

No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength. A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength, it cannot save.

But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love, to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine.

We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. May your unfailing love rest upon us, O Lord, even as we put our hope in you (Ps. 33:12-22).

May the Lord renew our hope to pray for our nation according to His Word and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Dave and Kim Butts are the founders of Harvest Prayer Ministries. Dave is also the chairman of America's National Prayer Committee, which seeks to provide collective servant leadership to the national prayer movement. Both Dave and Kim are gifted "prayer guide" developers. Among their works are *Asleep in the Land of Nod*, a 30-day revival prayer guide by Dave, and from both authors, *Revolution on Our Knees: 30 Days of Prayer for Neighbors and Nations*. Both are available at prayershop.org.

For ongoing help to stimulate your prayer life, we recommend *subscribing to Prayer Connect magazine*. This article appeared in issue 1.

A Daily Prayer Pattern for Strategic Areas of Our Nation

How can we pray effectively for the United States every day? Rather than simply praying, "God bless America" and hoping for the best, we can begin to pray God's purposes and plans more strategically over the key influencers in our country.

Many Christians are using the idea of seven centers of power as a guideline for their prayers. Here are some simple prayer points you can use to pray over these vital areas in our nation. Look up the Scriptures and use them to expand your prayers.

Daily Prayer Points for the Seven Centers of Power and

Influence in the United States:

1. Government: *righteousness, laws based on God's moral law, justice.* "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people" (Prov. 14:34). See also: Ps. 34:15; Ps. 89:14.

2. Media: *love for truth, fairness, godly standards.* "Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32). See also: Ps. 51:6; Zech. 8:16.

3. Business: *integrity, wisdom, generosity.* "Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight or quantity" (Lev. 19:35). See also: Prov. 3:9-10.

4. Education: *biblical standards, love for children, gifted teachers.* "When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law" (Matt. 7:28-29). See also: Deut. 4:9; Prov. 10:14.

5. Arts and Entertainment: *creativity, godliness, sensitivity to the Spirit.* "See, the Lord has chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts" (Ex.35:30). See also: Is. 51:11, Eccl. 3:4.

6. Family: *commitment to relationships, holiness, bringing up children in God's ways.* "He [an overseer] must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper

respect" (1 Tim. 3:4). See also: Deut. 11:19; Eph. 5:22-33.

7. Church: *revival, holiness, love for truth, passion for Jesus, evangelistic fervor, compassionate ministry.* "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord" (Acts 3:19). See also: Joel 2:12-14; Ps. 85:4-7.

–Dave and Kim Butts

Ministries that Focus on Prayer for America

Presidential Prayer Team

The Presidential Prayer Team was established in 2001 to pray for the president, national leaders, and Armed Forces. The website includes prayer for weekly featured leaders, 24/7 prayer watch with updated news items, a prayer wall to submit written prayers, and weekly teaching on prayer. (Phone: 866.433.PRAY; presidentialprayerteam.com)

Intercessors for America

IFA's goal is to inform and mobilize Christian intercessors across the nation to pray for local and national concerns. The website includes a 24-hour prayer wall, daily updated national prayer concerns, prayer resources, and information about local prayer groups. (Phone: 540.317.2070; getamericapraying.com)

Congressional Prayer Caucus Foundation

The Congressional Prayer Caucus Foundation (CPCF), a non-profit, non-partisan organization, works alongside elected officials who are calling America back to prayer and trust in God. Its mission is to preserve our Judeo-Christian heritage and protect the religious liberty of all Americans. (Phone: 757.546.2190; cpcfoundation.com)

National Day of Prayer

This annual observance (on the first Thursday of May) was created in 1952 by a joint resolution of Congress and signed into law by President Harry Truman. Its mission is to mobilize prayer in America and to encourage personal repentance and righteousness in the culture. Cities and states across the nation host prayer observances on this day, with an emphasis on prayer for America and its leadership in government, military, media, business, education, church, and family. The website lists local gatherings and provides prayer resources. (nationaldayofprayer.org)

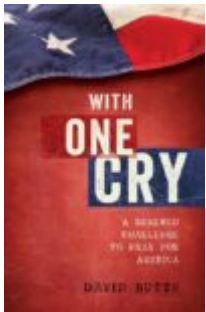
Capitol Hill Prayer Alert

As a network of praying believers, this ministry focuses on the need for repentant, heart-felt prayer for another Great Awakening in America. This group combines access to Christian political authorities with the study of biblical theology to inform intercessors of pertinent prayer needs on Capitol Hill. Their prayer alerts encourage intercessors to pray in agreement with a biblical focus. (prayeralert.org)

Prayer Force One

Described as “America’s Flagship for Prayer,” Prayer Force One is a national Christian ministry that seeks to unite America’s praying majority. They host two prayer meetings: 1) a virtual online prayer meeting with panoramic view of the White House, and 2) prayer the Sunday before a presidential election. The ministry also owns a converted Greyhound bus that they drive around the country to promote prayer for revival in the nation. (prayerforceone.com)

Dave and Kim Recommend



If you want to pray for our nation more effectively and passionately, we recommend purchasing Dave’s book: *With One Cry: A Renewed Challenge to Pray for America*.