



Prayers for Washington

MINISTRY TO STATE | Spring 2021

A PRAYER GUIDE FOR THOSE SERVING IN GOVERNMENT

Based on the Lord's Prayer, this helpful guide will lead us as we think about those serving in government

A PETITION FOR THE 46TH PRESIDENT

An original prayer by the author of several books about praying for political authorities

AN AUTHORITY OVER ALL

A devotional emphasizing the Christian example of praying for our leaders



TABLE OF CONTENTS

A PRAYER FOR WASHINGTON - 2

Ministry to State prays for elected officials across every branch of government.

PRAYING FOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN - 5

An original prayer for the new president, his administration, and family.

AN AUTHORITY OVER ALL - 7

A special devotional on
1 Timothy 2:1-6

BEING SALT AND LIGHT IN WASHINGTON - 8

How can Christians serving in government reflect Christ in their offices and communities?



A PRAYER FOR WASHINGTON

By Michael Langer

The following guide is based on the Lord's Prayer and meant to lead us into thoughtful prayer for those serving in all branches of government.

OUR FATHER. We come to you as children in prayer, not only for ourselves but also for those serving in government, and especially those who come to serve with newly elected members of Congress and the new administration. In a politically divided government, we ask that you knit your Church together, as one, as you and your Son are one, so that the world will know that you love them and sent your Son for them (John 17:21-23).

HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME.

Father, we pray that Christians serving in government would seek to make your name great instead of theirs (Genesis 11:4) and that they would see all their work as an offering of worship. We also pray that you would work through everyone serving in government to make yourself and your purposes known (1 Peter 2:9). Forgive those who wrongly use your name to justify illegal actions.

YOUR KINGDOM COME. Father, we pray that Christians serving in government would intentionally use their influence to develop laws and policies that are foretastes of the kingdom to all people. We ask that through their efforts, outsiders might be open to proclamations of the gospel. We pray that you would use those serving in government to restrain evil and to protect all people (Romans 13:1-4). We also ask that Christians would not conflate your kingdom with this nation, and that no one would use their freedom as a cover for evil by resorting to violence against those serving in government (1 Peter 2:16).

YOUR WILL BE DONE. Father, we pray that those serving in government would seek to promote and establish laws that are in accord with your revealed will; for justice towards the oppressed and unborn; for fair economic treatment of the

worker and the flourishing of the business owner; for the sojourner; for the prisoner (Leviticus 19); for widows and orphans (James 1:27); for the poor; for people of color, and people of every tongue and tribe, and nation (Revelation 7:9). We ask you to guide those serving in government to resolve long-standing issues of racial and economic injustice in our country.

GIVE US OUR DAILY BREAD.

Father, we pray that you would use those serving in government to promote our nation's economic flourishing and develop economic policies that are also a blessing for other countries (Jeremiah 29:7). Encourage and guide them in developing policies that protect property and also lift people out of poverty.



Guide them as they work to end the COVID pandemic and deal with its many implications on the marketplace, which is the primary means through which daily needs are met. Use those serving in government to protect jobs, feed the hungry, and provide housing for those in need.

FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS. Father, we pray that you would bring Christians serving in government to repentance for the sins they have committed and those things they have left undone. We pray that those serving in government would be quick to see the log in their eye before seeking to remove the splinter from their neighbor's eye (Matthew 7:3-5). We pray they would seek reconciliation to their brothers and sisters quickly (Matthew 5:23-24, Matthew 18:15-22).

We ask that you keep them from the sins of the flesh, such as, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, and envy (Galatians 5:14-15). We pray that you would forgive us for the tone of our political conversations (2 Timothy 2:22-25) and believing that the government is our true hope when you have offered your Son as our living hope (1 Peter 1:3).

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION. Father, we pray that you would protect those serving

in government from being drawn away from you by the lure of power and prestige (James 1:14), from falling into the trap of building factions (1 Corinthians 1:10-17) and using their positions to sin against others (Matthew 20:25-28). We ask that you use Ministry to State, the local church, and other ministries to strengthen your people to *“walk not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers; but to delight in in the law of the LORD, and on his law to meditate day and night”* (Psalm 1:1-2).

YOURS IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY. Father, despite the chaos we see in our country, we pray that you would encourage our hearts and minds in knowing you are ruling and reigning over all things (Colossians 1:15-20). Give us joy that is inexpressible (1 Peter 1:8) in knowing that you are working to bring all things in submission to your Son (Ephesians 1:17-23) who is making all things new (Revelation 21:5).

Rev. Michael Langer is the Associate Director of D.C. Ministry.

PRAYING FOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN

A PETITION FOR THE
46TH PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED STATES

By Chuck Garriott

Our Father in Heaven,

We humbly come before your
sovereign throne. You alone are King
of kings and Lord of lords (1 Timothy
6:15). You have made from nothing
the world in which we live and every
nation upon its surface is as dust to
you (Isaiah 40:15).

You are the ruler over all and you
deserve our honor, praise, and glory.
You have demonstrated your great
love and mercy to us through your
only Son, Jesus Christ. Today we
pray for Joseph R. Biden, the
President of the United States of
America. Thank you for his election
and installation on January 20th, 2021
and his commitment to his oath of
office.

We ask, O Lord, that his heart, mind,
and will would be directed towards
you alone. You remind us that the
“king’s heart is in the hand of Lord”
(Proverbs 21:1). In the months and
years ahead, he will have enormous
responsibility as he directs the affairs
of our nation. Provide him wise
(Proverbs 3, 13, 14, 17) and prudent
counsel from Vice-President Kamala
Harris, his cabinet, advisors, and
friends as he discerns the proper
course and path in which to lead this
nation.

Please give President Biden a great
hunger for truth and justice
(Proverbs 31:8-9) in every sphere of
life and work. May those who serve
him be people of moral integrity who
seek the good and welfare of our
land. Instill in him a deep desire for
an open and transparent
administration that is averse to
division.

You are the God of reconciliation.
We ask that President Biden,



his cabinet, and administration be agents of peace in a nation of great diversity. Our differences and divisions should be appreciated and used as a means of establishing a strong and healthy country. Please give to this president the leadership skills to promote harmony and peace in every sphere.

O, Lord, we pray for the President's family. Thank you for his marriage to Dr. Jill Biden, his children, and grandchildren. Protect and enhance their love for each other. May this marriage represent in every way your

relationship with your Bride, the church.

May this administration, that belongs to you, bring you praise, honor, and glory.

In the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, we pray,

Amen.

Chuck Garriott is the founder and Executive Director of Ministry to State.





AN AUTHORITY OVER ALL

By Will Stockdale

"First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.

1 Timothy 2:1-2

Scripture proposes something radical in its command to pray for *"kings and all who are in high positions."* It does not order Christians to celebrate or condemn political leaders, both of which are possible at one time or another.

Instead, the word of God says that we are to offer supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings for those ruling over us. Or, as we would say in a democracy, on our behalf. The command is radical because it suggests at least two things Christians believe about those who are in power.

First, by praying for those who are in power we are acknowledging that all governing power is ultimately derived from God. As one theologian has remarked, we pray because we are helpless. There is no individual or system of government in all the world that is not under the final authority of the Lord. We take comfort that ours is a God who sets up and deposes kings.

As it is the case that all governing power comes from God, so is it the case that all governing leaders are ultimately accountable to God. And so we pray for them to rule well, wisely, and justly for all people.

Second, this prayer demonstrates to a watching world where our ultimate loyalty lies. As the church, our marriage is to the Son of God, not a political party. We all have convictions about which party or political philosophy is best. But that cannot come before our prayers for leaders to rule with justice and mercy. Instead, we ask that God will give our country leaders who best permit us Christians to live lives that are “*godly and dignified in every way.*”

On January 20, Joseph R. Biden, was sworn into the highest office in the land. There is no shortage of feelings about this presidency, and what might be its outcomes. Even still, we Christians acknowledge in our prayers who is ultimately in charge and where our ultimate loyalty lies.

Rather than partisan infighting, may the church in America be marked by a desire for “*all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth*” over these next four years.

Will Stockdale is a Ministry Associate in Washington, D.C.

BEING SALT AND LIGHT IN WASHINGTON

By Adam Smith

One of Ministry to State’s core values is to “Provide encouragement and support in the development of a Biblical world and life view for those in government who make a profession of faith.” In other words, we feel called to help Christians in government learn how to live out their faith Monday through Saturday, not just on Sundays.

We believe that Scripture directs us to be agents who bring love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control to a world often filled with the opposite of those things.

This means that Christians will continually be learning how to speak, think, and act in wise and loving ways towards those who do not share our faith. Two biblical metaphors that Jesus gives to help us do this are the metaphors of being “*salt*” and “*light.*”

In both of these metaphors, Jesus teaches us that Christians have a responsibility to care for the unbelievers among us. Like salt that is rubbed into decaying meat, Christians

are to help society flourish and not fall into ruin. Like light that shines from the sun or from a lamp, Christians are to shine brightly into this world to illuminate a new and better way: the way of Christ.

Jesus is saying that Christians are not meant to be passive in this world but active! After all, salt is to be *rubbed into* meat and light *shines into* darkness. But Jesus also warns us of two great dangers.

The first is being a salt that has no taste, or practicing a Christianity that is unappealing and off-putting. Salt, as a flavorant, brings out the best of what it is seasoning, wetting the appetite, and making the food that has been seasoned with it taste its best. But, as Jesus points out, salt that has lost this ability is useless. It must be thrown out.

Similarly, the life of a Christian is meant to be appealing in the same way that salt is meant to be flavoring. The Apostle Paul makes this very clear to us by using a similar metaphor in Colossians: *"Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person."*

In other words, Christians are meant to wisely and graciously speak to unbelievers with speech that is both

appealing and personal.

Sadly, most of us in Washington, D.C. have seen a lot of rancid Christianity that is unappealing, impersonal, and off-putting. We have seen rioters storming the Capitol Building carrying flags proclaiming Jesus' name. We have heard and read harsh words coming from Christians directed towards our politicians, whom some of us call "boss" or "friend."

Furthermore, there is a large segment of the population who identify as Christians that wish for our culture to be determined by a "moral majority" that seeks to impose traditional values and morals on our culture through forceful rhetoric and political action rather than by following the way of Christ.

Suffice it to say, there is a lot of salt that needs to be thrown out.

The second danger is being light that is hidden, or living out a faith that is unapparent and hypocritical.

In verses 14-16, Jesus warns us against the danger of hiding away from the world and not engaging with it in any way. Rather, he commands us to *"let our light shine before others"* by *"doing good works"* which *"give glory to [the] Father."*

Being passive or indifferent towards unbelievers is not an option.

Many Christians hide our faith from others and live our lives in a way that looks so similar to unbelievers that our gospel light is all but hidden. Often our speech and actions demonstrate that we have been shaped more by the culture than our faith. To the watching world, this makes our faith both seem unapparent and hypocritical.

So how do we avoid falling into the dangers that Jesus is warning us against?

Perhaps the first thing to be said is that our words really matter. Jesus warns that we must think before we speak. That means that before we speak, post, tweet, retweet, share, like, or email, we must ask ourselves, “What will this make unbelievers think of me or Christianity or Jesus Himself?”

We must also remember that the world watches us. We must make

sure that when unbelievers look at our behavior-- in the office, during a staff meeting, or on social media-- they first see the light of Christ in us.

As Tim Keller has eloquently said, “Christians are called by God to be living so sacrificially and beautifully that the people around us, who don’t believe what we believe, will soon be unable to imagine the world without us.”

Finally, we must remember that it is Christ who gives us both our saltiness and our light. It is no surprise that these verses come immediately after the Beatitudes. Saltiness and light are produced only in people who intimately remember the gospel: that though we are poor in spirit, ours is the kingdom of God.

Adam Smith is a Ministry Resident in Washington, D.C.

PARTNER WITH US

Ministry to State ministers to those serving in government by offering outreach, discipleship, encouragement, community, and prayer that is uniquely tailored to their vocational context.

In his Letter to the Philippians, Paul thanked the church for their partnership.

He wanted them to know that their partnership blessed him as he grew in trust of the Lord, blessed those he was serving by providing for the expenses of the ministry, and also blessed them as he considered the fruit “to their credit.”

Ministry to State is a partnership between our staff and our supporters as we minister to those serving in Washington. Please consider partnering with us today.

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