Neighborliness Prayer Guide

Neighborliness starts as an inward journey that naturally leads us into relationship with others. These prayers are both personal and corporate. This prayer guide will give suggestions for prayer and intercession as we seek to see the kingdom of God established on earth as it is in heaven.

**PRAY LIKE JESUS**

When the disciples asked Jesus how to pray to the father, he responded with a structured prayer that he encouraged all believers to pray. Let’s do the same as we pray for hope and healing in our hearts and in our community.

*Jesus said, “Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us today the food we need, and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.”*

**A LOOK INWARD**

As we pray for hope and healing, we remember that cities can change because cities are made of people. Individuals. We start inward by asking God to search us first in the same way that David did in Psalm 139:23-24.

Notice that David was asking God to point out anything that he could not see that was keeping him from pure worship and devotion to God. So, too, should we pray that God would show us if we have any lingering division in our heart toward our neighbors.

*He prayed, “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.”*

**PRAY FOR YOUR NEIGHBORS**

Jesus was asked in Mark 12:28-34 to pick the most important commandment out of over six hundred commands in religious law. He answered simply: love God and neighbors. The scriptures clearly show that our *neighbors* are anyone created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). We are brothers and sisters from the same family.

Let’s pray a structured prayer from Phyllis Tickle’s prayer book, *The Divine Hours:*

*O God, you have taught me to keep all your commandments by loving you and my neighbor: Grant me the grace of your Holy Spirit, that I may be devoted to you with my whole heart, and united to others with pure affection; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**PRAY FOR JUSTICE**

Hope and healing are realized when the plans and purposes of God are accomplished in our neighborhoods as it is in heaven. Revelation 21:3-4 paints a picture of the perfection of heaven realized on earth. It says, *“God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”*

As people called to embody the message of Christ, we pray for justice for all of our neighbors.

Walter Brueggemann poetically cries for justice in his book *Prayers for a Privileged People.* Let’s join him by praying, *“You, God of justice and dignity and equity, keep the promises you embodied in Jesus, the the poor may be first class members of society, that the needy may have good care and respect, that the poor earth may rejoice in well-being, that we may all come to Sabbath rest together, the owner and the worker, the leisure class and the labor class, all at peace in dignity and justice, not on the cheap, but good measure, pressed down, running over… forgiven.”*

**THE GLORIA**

*Glory be to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, so it is now, and so it shall ever be, world without end. Alleluia. Amen.*