

CALL OF THE WATCHMEN

November 2020

Interceding together with Jesus

Jesus is by far the most fascinating person we could ever know. There is no limit to the words, the poems, the songs that we can use to express who Jesus really is. His beauty and kindness, his character, and his passion capture our wildest imagination and at the same time answer our deepest yearnings (Colossians 1:16) - including those for revival, which we have had in our hearts for decades.

When I pray to him, I first look for eye contact, because I want to intercede together with him. I align my heart with his. Then I take a verse from the Bible that describes him and his nature. This helps me to be drawn towards him. In Revelation 19:12 we read that Jesus' eyes are like blazing fire. In these eyes I see his love and passion for me, for my brothers and sisters in the body of Christ, for the people of my nation and all nations. Nobody loves as passionately as Jesus! I need to experience this love again and again. It cleanses me and sanctifies me. It brings healing to my heart. The depth of Jesus' passion – in his death and suffering, in his joy, his tears, his love, his gentleness, his holy fire and in so much more – is the source and inspiration for my intercession. Out of the heart of Jesus I seek to pray for this land. I have of course the latest news and information in mind, but I do not let this get in the way of looking to Jesus. With Jesus before me, I ask him: *Jesus, how do you think and feel about Germany and what are you praying for our country right now?*

Such questions help me align my heart with his. At the same time, I know that he is also interested in my thoughts and concerns. He loves it when our hearts blend in with his. I am encouraged by the fact that Jesus is always interceding (Hebrews 7:25) and I can join him. We never pray alone. We enter as intercessors into a heavenly prayer meeting that runs continuously (Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 4).

Next, I take pen and paper and write down what I feel that Jesus is telling me. In writing it down it becomes clearer to me. These notes along with the current prayer letter then form the basis for my intercession. It begins and ends together with Jesus and the assurance that our land is upheld by his love - even through difficult times. -AS-

The second wave

We are confronted every day with rising corona numbers, warnings and new regulations. Again there are travel restrictions, nursing and old people's homes are being closed, local lockdowns imposed and the requirement to wear masks tightened. At the same time, courts are overturning the introduction of banning offers for overnight accommodation, of night curfews and of requirements to quarantine, and health authorities are bowing down to reliance on contact tracing. While it seemed that we were getting a grip on the pandemic over the summer period, the re-introduction of official measures is now threatening to get out of control.

Many more tests are being carried out than in the spring and the number of people who have become ill is much lower.

Nevertheless, the Federal Government wants to keep the number of infections under control under all circumstances. But we cannot eradicate the virus. The state could hardly be able to cushion the effect of a second lockdown on the economy and it would find little acceptance. The virus and all the measures against it lie as a heavy yoke on our land and are driving us to despair. Are we not at the point where we have to hand it over to God?

Prayer:

- **We bow under the easy joke of Jesus that leads to rest and peace of mind. (Matthew 11:28-30)**
- **He is the Lord of life and death. Let us repent for our pride that we can succeed in controlling the virus. (Isaiah 45:5ff)**
- **Neither a spirit of anxiety nor of control shall rule in our land, but rather the fear of God. (Proverbs 1:7) -KH-**

The USA after the election

The USA is experiencing one of the biggest crises in its history. The country is deeply divided and social peace is extremely fragile. Even after the election, the risk of a further escalation of violence cannot be ruled out. Above all, our intercession for the reconciliation and renewal of American society is important.

As Germans, there are many reasons for us to be thankful for America, especially as they stood by us to restore peace, democracy and stability after the war. Both politically and economically, the USA is our most important ally outside of the European Union. Even though transatlantic relations come under pressure from time to time, the friendship between our two nations has lasted for over 70 years. The European view towards how to make political decisions has not always been in agreement with the American approach, but there is an invisible bond that secures our relationship as friends. Over many decades God has also woven a "spiritual bond" between American believers and German churches. Through the missionaries and teachers who have tirelessly invested their time in Germany, we have seen spiritual growth in so many areas in our land. Let us pray for the United States of America with a heart full of compassion.

Prayer:

- **Thanks for the German-American friendship and for all the help that we have received. (Proverbs 17:17)**
- **For healing of wounds, reconciliation and a new start in society in the USA. (2 Corinthians 5:18,19)**
- **For the USA to be released into its role and calling among the nations. (Romans 8:26) -AS-**

The right to life

Every working day in Germany, around 400 children are killed in the womb. That is about 100,000 children per year. Only 3% of these terminations are made on medical grounds and far less than 0.01% are linked to criminal circumstances such as rape. In around 97% of the cases, the so-called "counselling provision" is applied, which according to German law enables a pregnancy to be terminated without

penalty. Worldwide, statistics show that abortion is by far the leading cause of death. In second place is heart disease, with 9.4 million deaths per year, representing less than one fifth of the children killed in the womb.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) supports abortion and promotes the killing of unborn children as a worldwide human right. It advocates that countries should legalise abortion. In this way countless children are robbed of their right to life. For many women, exercising this "right to self-determination" ["freedom of choice" in USA law] is the beginning of a spiral of guilt and self-justification that often leads to depression and other forms of mental disorders.

The Bible warns us not to call what is wrong right – call evil good. (Isaiah 5:20). We do not want to hard-heartedly judge women who struggle with their pregnancy, but we are called to be the voice of our God who gives life and promises his children salvation, a future and hope.

Prayer:

- **That we as the body of Jesus will be released from indifference and become the voice of God for life. (Psalm 139:13-16)**
- **Refusal of further proposals in law for the legalisation of abortion. (Deuteronomy 30:19,20)**
- **For pregnant women who are currently waiting for an abortion. (Jeremiah 29:11-13)** -TF-

Assistance to live rather than to die

On February 26, 2020, the Federal Constitutional Court in Germany ruled that the prohibition of well administered support of suicide (assisted suicide) is unconstitutional. In its reasoning for the judgment, it claims that personal freedom according to German Basic Law includes a right to a self-determined death. The court describes the management of one's own life and how it will end as an expression of human dignity and independence for personal development.

The state must as a right not restrict the freedom and self-determination of its citizens, in accordance with the Basic Law. But according to the preamble of the Basic Law, it must also create the legal framework such that we can exercise this freedom having a responsibility before God and for one another, and not just in relation to individual rights. The task of a humane society must be to strengthen its readiness to make sacrifices to take care of the seriously ill and to alleviate their suffering, but not to hand out lethal injections! As the court correctly recognises in the reasoning for the judgment, there has been a steady increase in "death on request" in countries with liberal regulations on assisted suicide and assistance to die.

Prayer:

- **Give thanks for the gift of life and pray to have love for the elderly, the sick and the disabled. (Psalm 8)**
- **Repentance for taking over control and lordship of human life. Our lives belong to you, O Lord! (Isaiah 29:15,16)**
- **For the Health Ministry and the Government to revise the law such that it does not incontestably approve assistance to die, but rather assistance to live. (Jeremiah 22:1-9)** -KH-

Renewal of retail trade

With more than three million employees, 300,000 companies and 160,000 trainees, the retail trade is the third largest business sector in Germany. The retail trade is undergoing a difficult structural change, which is directly affected by advancing digitalization, but also by the needs of a changing society. Many cities are affected by a decline in specialist retailers; some inner cities are threatened with becoming deserted areas. The corona crisis is accelerating these trends; the retail trade is in dire straits in many places. But crises also harbour opportunities. City centres can continue to be a place for retail trade and also a meeting point for citizens when innovative concepts can be found and there is a new and successful cooperation between all those concerned. In some cities, government, retailers, caterers, property owners and consumers work closely together to find comprehensive solutions. A renewal in the economy goes hand in hand with a rethink of the social issues by everyone involved. God cares for our cities. He will give us a new awareness of the task on hand and creative solutions for our people and the environment.

Prayer:

- **Help for retailers and employees who now find themselves in severe financial need. (Hebrews 4:16)**
- **For innovation in the retail trade and cooperation for the wellbeing of our cities. (Jeremiah 29:11)**
- **For men and women who can bring God's thoughts, plans and creative solutions into the retail trade. (Jeremiah 29:12,13)** -AS-

Home-coming to Zion – Aliyah

With the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in AD 70 the Jewish people were scattered all over the world. But the longing to return to their homeland is deeply rooted in the hearts of his people. There are many prophetic statements in the Bible about the fact that God will gather his people from among the nations (Ezekiel 11:17).

From the late 19th century until today we see God leading his people make "Aliyah" to Eretz Israel in "waves of immigration". With the miracle of the founding of the modern state of Israel after the Second World War, the Jewish people have a home again that is open to all Jews who now are still living in exile. Since then, Jews have returned to Israel from many countries around the world.

As anti-Semitism rises in Europe, God once again entrusts us with his plans for his people. We want to protect them and bring them home "on our arms and shoulders" when God calls them back to Israel (Isaiah 49:22).

Prayer:

- **For protection and security for Jews in Germany.**
- **That the body of Christ will support Jews in Germany who want to return home. (Jeremiah 16:14,15,16a)**
- **Thanks and blessings for the work of Israel ministries in Germany – ICEJ, Ebenezer, CFFI, Initiative 27.Januar. (Genesis 12,3)** -TF-

*Wishing you all God's blessings,
Alexander Schlueter and Team*