

### Together with Jesus

In the past year, God has opened up new ways for us to grow in prayer. The Holy Spirit is very eager to reveal Jesus, His heavenly home, and His glory to us in greater measure. He invites us to “rise up to a higher level” - to be more consciously aware of the reality of the presence of Jesus with us and the reality of the heavenly realms. (Revelation 4:1ff). At a time when fresh revelation can no longer be simply experienced based on what we have received in the past, we must hear a call from heaven for a renewed lifestyle in close fellowship with Him. Because heaven and earth are now becoming closer and closer.

Such revelation comes from our relationship with Jesus! Jesus and us - we must grow in unity with him. No more praying apart from him. Everything arises and flows out of his heart and then through our hearts into our land. We no longer pray in our own wisdom and power. Jesus seeks eye level contact with us because he wants us to shape the future together with him and pray creatively. When we pray with him, our prayers take on a new relevance and meaning. It is through experiencing the love and restorative power of God that the atmosphere in even the darkest of places can be completely changed, thus bringing healing to creation and presenting a real and true image of God within our society. We want to learn to pray more powerfully after our encounter with Jesus and to sharpen our sensitivity to the spirit of God. Here are a few practical steps:

1. **Ask Jesus: where are you right now?** The Holy Spirit will enable you to do this imaginatively. It doesn't matter if you are not sure and only suspect for example that he is sitting right next to you. Ask him to come closer or go towards him.
2. **Look at Jesus. How does he appear to you?** Note his facial expression. Jesus loves it when we look at him closely.
3. **Ask him to tell you something he likes about you.** What does he want to tell you that you don't already know about yourself. Take the first thing you hear from him and speak it out aloud. You can't go wrong with this.
4. **What do you want to talk to me about, Jesus?** Give him your time and attention and get into a discussion with him. Listen to him carefully and keep asking him questions. That's how you get to know his heart.
5. Finally, ask Jesus: **Could you please show me something that is in heaven?** Let Jesus lead you to different places. Pick up your Bible and ask Jesus to show you “the river of life”, “the throne room”, or any other places you see there.

Alexander Schlüter

### Surrounded by angels

God has placed angels (ministering spirits) at our side. (Hebrews 1:14). In the Bible we read of countless encounters that people had with angels. The Word of God assures us that they are always with us and stand at our side. (Psalm 91:11). Although there are very powerful angels and they have received great glory from God, we do not worship them. (Psalm 103:20). They also do not want this. But they are present everywhere in order to serve us. We want to be aware of them and learn to pray in closer relationship with the heavenly world.

We simply cannot do without their help and support. They also served Jesus when he was on earth.

#### Prayer:

- **Lord, open the eyes of our hearts and teach us how we can pray more closely linked and united with the heavenly realm, always being aware of Your and heaven's presence.**

Alexander Schlüter

### Room for the Kingdom of God in our land

When Jesus came to this earth, there was in the atmosphere - in the visible and invisible world - the compelling question: “Will God really find room in this world to come in and make Himself and His kingdom known?” There was “no room in the inn”, and yet a place was found for the birth of a King whose kingdom is not of this world. It was the beginning of a new era, namely the Kingdom of God breaking through on earth. Since then the question is: “Will God find room in our hearts to make Himself and His kingdom known in and through us in this world?”

As intercessors we are, in a way, the heart of our nation. At the beginning of the new year, do we want to consciously

make room for God to make Himself and His kingdom known in and through us? And could the outcome be different from what we imagine? May it challenge our thinking and take it to a new level? To the level of the Kingdom of God? Are there areas and patterns of thought that can be shaken by: “The time has come. ... The Kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!”? (Mark 1:15).

At the time of Jesus, the majority of Jews expected an earthly ruler. Someone who changes the political situation, who leads a revolution and establishes a new rule. But Jesus instead brought a kingdom not of this world, a kingdom that begins in our hearts. He brought a whole new way of thinking and living. He presented a different message than expected. Many were troubled by it. But some were ready for this King to be born into their hearts. They were willing to die to their own ambitions in order to receive his life, his way of thinking, and his kingship. They were willing to become part of God's kingdom in their community.

Let us pray for a new chapter in the story of God's kingdom in our land. A chapter that He will bring to birth in our hearts as intercessors and that will transform our thinking. A chapter to extend the Kingdom of God within our land. (Matthew 6:10).

Tanja Frank

### Shortage of skilled workers in day-care centres and schools

There is a shortage of skilled workers in many sectors, especially in the service professions, such as in the hotel industry, in maintenance and repair, and in health and safety services. Day care centres and schools are also affected in an alarming way. Nationwide, there is talk of 100,000 child care and 40,000 teacher positions that are vacant. There are many reasons for this: higher birth-rate and immigration, the increase in all-day care services, increasing requirements for social in-

clusion and language training, but also inadequate preparation for the fact that the large number of workers from the baby-boom generation of the 1960s will retire in the 2020s, and more. Teachers, trainers, educators and carers are under severe stress because of the heavy workload and are taking time off due to illness.

Our education system also needs a fundamental overhaul to equip children for life in the coming decades. Many of the teaching methods and educational materials are antiquated and are not now adequate to give children a healthy identity, self-confidence, assertiveness, team spirit, joy and resilience for the demands of the current world. Politicians and employers can create better working environments and conditions, but still cannot provide all the answers. A fundamental change is required in our society that only God can create. He himself wants to be the father of the younger generation. Solutions spring from his heart. The longing of his heart can draw the young generation to himself (whatever the circumstances). We now bring not only our children, but also their teachers, trainers, educators and carers, together before God's throne in prayer.

**Prayer:**

- **Let us first recognise our close relationship with Jesus and consciously take a seat with him in heavenly realms. Jesus, what do you want to do in this uncertain and precarious situation?**
- **How can we release your glory to fill our day care centres and school classrooms?**
- **We bless educators and teachers, trainers, educators and carers in our country and pray that they will receive encouragement and strength.**

Alexander Schlüter

**Prayer for politics**

We are observing trends in politics that very much concern us. The ideological mainstream left-green gender and climate policies are taking a more and more rigorous hold on humanity and creation and thus encompassing almost all areas of our lives: family, education, economy, finance, energy, health, social affairs, military defence, and more. There is now scarcely any scientific discourse in the public sphere anymore, and dissenting political voices are being delegitimized. Our current government has set out to reap the harvest of the neo-Marxism from 1968 with its destructive fruits. Before the federal elections in 2017, we held a prayer conference in Berlin, where we exposed the roots of Marxism and repented of its seduction to lead young people astray. There was a prophetic picture illustrating that when the roots below are cut, the trees above will fall down. We are now witnessing increasing dysfunctionality in almost every aspect of society. Ideologically motivated political decisions rarely solve any problems, but do indeed create worse ones.

How can we continue to pray for politics? Anti-God policies and projects that deliberately undermine the Christian foundations of our history and culture are doomed to fail. We cannot improve them even through prayer. But where they begin to break down, opportunities arise where we as Christians are asked to create something new based on our biblical foundation and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. I see that in the midst of increasing chaos, the Lord wants to give us treasures

from heaven as solutions to solve the chaos, and we will find them wherever we stand firm or are called to act. It is about the ecology of mankind and creation, which with us the Lord wants to restore. (Romans 8:19-22).

**Prayer:**

- **For repentance that as Christians we have preferred too often to stay out of politics and left the decisions and policies to ideological protagonists. (Romans 13:1-4)**
- **Thanks to God for his faithfulness and his promised grace in judgment in spite of our failures to act according to his instructions to us. (Jeremiah 29:4-14)**
- **Pray that the churches equip and encourage Christians to take responsibility in politics and society and that they will be endowed by God with supernatural creativity and wisdom. (1Samuel 16:11-13)**

Karin Heepen

**New language for a cultural transformation!**

"Language creates reality." is a quote attributed to the philosopher Wittgenstein. Language (the way we communicate and express ourselves) creates the reality of the moment, and transforms our thinking and the way in which we act and respond. Language also determines our identity - how we are viewed by others. And that is why language is also important when used to present the Kingdom of God. Every time we use a word, it evokes images, memories and emotions in us and in those around us. Language also influences the way we perceive a given situation.

Jesus wants to reveal himself in a new way in our time. In order to make God's work and actions clearly visible in our time, we must not only look through the "glasses" of past experiences and forms of expression. Rather, we need much more courage for new forms of expression – a new language that creates new images in us and that reflects some aspect of God's nature and beauty. Language not only describes reality, but also shapes it. In this way we experience how God may be expanding our perception and imagination. Language awakens our spirit to a new reality and, and at the same time, draws us into what the future holds.

At all times artists - poets, but also painters and musicians - have captured something of God's glory in language and in art and presented it to the society of their time. Think of Johannes vom Kreuz or Count Zinzendorf, who became cultural creators with their writings and songs. Language is a mirror of society. We have an important contribution in providing clear answers to the questions of our time. Together with the Holy Spirit we can become cultural creators if we do not just concentrate on what already exists, but rather create something new that gives new expression to God's love.

**Prayer:**

- **Holy Spirit, show us how Jesus wants to reveal himself in our time and give new ways to communicate and express this in our language – in our speech and in pictures!**
- **Awaken the hearts of poets and artists to new languages to communicate the Kingdom of God and "make their tongues like the pens of skillful writers"! (Psalm 45:1,2)**

Alexander Schlüter

***Wishing you a blessed New Year 2023!***

Alexander Schlüter and team

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