

### Prayer with an intimate connection to the heart of God - seeking His perspective

Current world events challenge us. Conflicts, tensions, and uncertainties intrude upon our consciousness, demanding a response. But in prayer, this response cannot simply consist of taking a stand, weighing arguments, or getting lost in the pros and cons of our thinking. Rather, we are invited to discover a new depth in prayer—a dimension that transcends human perspectives.

As we pray, we are in danger of being imperceptibly drawn into the logic of conflict. We begin to take sides, judge, weigh the options, and in doing so, lose sight of what God himself is doing. This is precisely the point where we should think differently. The first and most important question in prayer is not what we think or feel - but what is God thinking and doing – what is His perspective?

This question opens a room for thought in which we gain some distance and relief from the loud voices of the world and find access to a wisdom that reaches deeper than any human analysis. God's perspective transcends the narrow categories of right and wrong, friend and foe. It leads us into a greater understanding—an *awareness* of His sovereignty and His greatness. In this light, even complex situations begin to appear in a different way.

With this perspective there also comes a major change in how we respond to the atmosphere. The world as we experience it is often characterised by pressure, fear, and confinement. This atmosphere also influences our prayer. It can limit us and obstruct our access to God's wisdom. But when we learn to see "from heaven", things change fundamentally.

From heaven, everything appears differently. What was previously oppressive loses its weight. What seemed overwhelming becomes clearer. Not because the circumstances change straight away, but because we step into a different reality—the presence of God Himself. This changed atmosphere is not an emotional state, but a spiritual reality into which we are allowed to consciously enter.

And finally, this depth in prayer leads us to an often-overlooked point: prayer doesn't always need words. Words can be helpful, but they are not the core. At its heart, prayer is making an intimate connection. It is a conscious entry into our oneness with God - a simple, astute presence before Him. In this connection, we recognise ourselves as part of His being and reality, as people who are connected to Him and play a part in His actions in the world.

When we begin to put this relationship into practice, our prayer life fundamentally changes. It becomes less of a struggle for the right words or concerns and more of being one with God Himself. From this unity arises a new form of effectivity: a prayer that not only reacts but also actively helps to achieve something.

For God is not distant. He is present and active - at all times He guides and directs the course of this world. When we connect with Him, we join with Him in this! We no longer pray only to Him, but with Him.

Thus, prayer becomes a place of wisdom, clarity, and creative power. And especially in times like these, this is precisely what we need: people who see more deeply, hear more widely, and live and pray from God's perspective. Alexander Schlüter

### Prayer for a fundamental change in the culture within Germany

Germany carries within it a deep longing for unity – and also to overcome our history of division. This deep desire, often silently inward, shapes all generations, all relationships, and our social interactions. It manifests itself in how difficult genuine closeness is for us. The division between the East and West is particularly evident, which not only created borders but also has shaken trust. The effects of this division linger to this day – as a feeling of not exactly belonging together.

But the causes run deeper: wars, guilt, coming to terms with the past, and repression have shaped a culture in which just mere functioning often became more important than really feeling for one another. Order did provide stability but did not enable closeness. Where connection between people is lacking, social behaviour such as withdrawing, holding back, exercising control, or demarcation emerge. Racism, too, can be understood as an expression of inner insecurity – as an attempt to secure identity through being distant. But true identity grows from connection, not from separation.

At the same time, the longing for genuine togetherness is now growing. More and more people sense that change is possible. Perhaps it begins where responsibility is not just a duty, but a requirement for relationship. Where we consider

one another's needs, a vibrant network emerges. This requires honesty and the courage to be vulnerable. Vulnerability is not a weakness, but the beginning of closeness. Trust grows where people are allowed to reveal themselves.

Our world is changing rapidly, and we need God's heart for our country, not just as an idea, but as a tangible reality. His love is not distant; it needs to be felt. Perhaps God is inviting us to allow ourselves to feel our own emotions again: pain, brokenness, longing. What if healing begins where we allow ourselves to be touched - by God and by one another? Then a new chapter could begin, characterised by vibrant connection and closeness instead of mere functioning.

Such a change in the culture rarely happens suddenly. Rather, it is like groundwater that rises slowly but surely - through many small, but sincere stages within people and relationships. Prayer can be a driving force in this process when we seriously seek change in us as we talk with and listen to God.

#### Prayer:

- **For overcoming the East-West divide: Father, dissolve mistrust, pride, and hurt. Grant us genuine encounter with others.**

- **For forming our identity through relationship: Father, teach us who we are - not in isolation, but in relationship to you and to each other.**
- **For courage to be vulnerable: Father, break through the culture of just functioning. Grant us the courage to be authentic.**

Is a change in the culture possible within Germany? Yes, but not as a sudden transformation. Culture changes in small steps, in how we listen, how we deal with conflict, and how we allow closeness. Cultural change does just not begin "within Germany," but begins between two people who truly connect and seek unity and genuine togetherness with one other.

Alexander Schlüter

#### **Joint taxation and joint insurance for married couples**

The German Federal Government plans to abolish joint taxation and joint insurance coverage for married couples. Joint taxation takes into account the economic dependence within a marriage by taxing a family as a single economic unit rather than taxing them as individuals. The Federal Constitutional Court has indeed repeatedly upheld joint taxation of married couples, including income splitting, as an appropriate form of taxation. Similarly, the free joint insurance coverage of a spouse without their own income is a proven solidarity instrument within the healthcare system. It integrates families into society's shared responsibility for health and long-term care. A mandatory contribution from previously jointly insured spouses would primarily harm low- and middle-income families, while higher earners would migrate to private health insurance.

According to the Basic Law, marriage and family are under the special protection of the state. Families receive state benefits as they provide essential services to society, thereby stabilising the social structures and relieving the burden on the social security systems. The proposed reforms would undermine fundamental principles of economic policy such as subsidiarity, solidarity, and social justice. The intention of having mothers working full-time in order to generate economic growth by paying taxes and social security contributions disregards the importance of the fulfilling of family responsibilities, childcare, the support of relatives, and volunteer work, thereby further destabilising family life and overburdening social welfare systems. **Prayer:**

- **That the Body of Christ may be a model for a society based on solidarity in caring for others. (Galatians 6:2)**
- **For the protection of marriages and families from any changes in German law with new ideological structures and exploitation for economic growth within the country. (Proverbs 14:34)**
- **For family policies that support young couples in having children and raising them healthily. (Psalm 128)**

Karin Heepen

#### **Germany – and our local communities**

Our country is like an organism, made up of its diverse and varied federal states. The cities and villages within these states are all a part of Germany. It is in these places, in our local communities, that Germany becomes real. Here we live, and here politics and society become real and have a direct impact on our lives. Every community has its own identity, personality, and beauty. As part of the greater whole, we as Christians and worshippers live here together with the people. God's love is like water; it seeps through every crack and crevice into the whole city, into the whole village. According to Psalm 24:1, the whole world belongs to God:

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." When we have this perspective, when we believe that God's love indeed embraces our entire community, perhaps we will pray in a completely different way.

We come to HIM and ask: "How do you see me in this city, in this village?" "How may I bring in your love and your peace?" "Am I the water of love that seeps into very special places?" Perhaps He will send you to the sports club, the city council, the business, the shop, the retirement home, the neighbourhood. As multifaceted as we are, so too are the ways God has for us to be conscious of the society here, as servants and lovers of this place. Some fears of making contacts may just fall away. Jesus has already prepared us for all of this.

Are we open to entirely new paths? May the voice of Jesus lead us to places we have never been before? May Jesus show us the hurts and dark places in our communities so that we may pray for light, healing, and justice? As a local church, the community of all Christians, we are encouraged, equipped, and strengthened to go to those who need us, to build up the society with the wisdom God gives us. At a time when divisions are opening up between people, we may bring people together with gentleness and peace, and be creative with optimism and gratitude. **Prayer:**

- **Father, reveal to us your vision of love for our local community.**
- **Open our hearts to the beauty and needs of our local community.**
- **Show us what you are doing in our land and where you would like to send us to serve and build up the society.**

Johann-Christian Fromme

#### **Longing for peace**

Amidst the wars and unrest of this world, a quiet yet powerful longing for divine peace arises. In our prayers we ask God to transform our hearts and make us instruments of his light and reconciliation. May his Spirit work through us so that hatred is transformed into love, fear into trust, and violence into mercy. Peace begins not only on the battlefields of world politics but also in our thoughts, words, and deeds. When we live with compassion, forgiveness, and justice, God's peace can spread step by step.

#### **Prayer:**

Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let us sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,

grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console,

to be understood as to understand;

to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned

and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen

*(Prayer of Francis of Assisi)*

Alexander Schlüter

#### **Together in unity and solidarity for our land,**

Alexander Schlüter and Team