

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER TASK FORCE

ANNUAL CALL TO REPENTANCE

*A special word to all NDP coordinators and hosts of prayer events on
The National Day of Prayer*

Following is an important suggested script that you or the person leading an NDP prayer event may adapt to help lead people in a meaningful season of quiet repentance at an appointed time during your event (preferably in the opening moments).

We at the NDP Task Force believe all events, no matter their size should include a time of individual and corporate repentance. The fact that all events would have such a time has tremendous significance because it would mean agreement in repentance at as many as 40,000 or more prayer gatherings on The National Day of Prayer, including our main event in Washington DC where such a time is planned for all future NDP Washington DC gatherings. Jesus said, "...I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by the father in heaven" (Matthew 18:19, NIV). Imagine 40,000 groups (not just individuals) in a time of agreement in repentance all across America on the same day! These moments, alone, could change the course of our nation at a desperate time.

A CALL TO REPENTANCE

SUGGESTED POSTURE

After the host or MC gives the biblical basis that follows, he or she should ask all who physically can do so to kneel in silent repentance for three to five minutes. In settings where keyboard or appropriate music can be played, this is helpful for a worshipful background. If a worship team is present for the remainder of the event, we recommend they **not** sing during this time as that can be distracting. Only the keyboard is recommended. To bring people out of this time the MC or appointed person should conclude in a prayer **while the people are still kneeling**. Then they can be asked to return to their seats or stand and all sing an appropriate worship song. For outside prayer gatherings on Capitol or court house steps (etc.), you can adapt this time as appropriate, even if people stand quietly with bowed heads as a sign of humility.

SUGGESTED SCRIPT

We come now to a very special and vital time in our prayer gathering as we set aside all other plans and focuses for this day to quietly wait before God in personal and corporate repentance.

Today, on our National Day of Prayer, there may well be as many as 40 to 50 thousand gatherings, some quite large (perhaps in the thousands) and some with 5, 10 or 20 people. All have been encouraged to set aside a minimum of five minutes to quietly kneel before God in an act of repentance.

Because Jesus said in Matthew 18:19 that when just two agree in prayer before the Father, that the Father in heaven would respond, imagine what 40- to 50 thousand gatherings in agreement would mean. If just ten people per gathering participated, that would be 500,000 in agreement. It will probably be many times that number.

BIBLICAL BASIS

Our biblical basis for doing what we are about to do is perhaps the most familiar conditional promise of God to His people regarding “healing their land” in all of Scripture. It is 2 Chronicles 7:14. Although quoted often, I read it again: “...if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land” (NIV).

From the outset of reading this promise it is clear it is not given to a non-believing community or people, but God’s very own people—those called by His Name. The healing of the land begins first with God’s people.

Then we note four mandates...

If my people...

1. humble themselves (that’s submission)
2. and pray (that’s supplication)
3. and seek my face (that’s desperation)
4. and turn from their wicked ways (that’s repentance)

Then God will...

1. hear from heaven
2. forgive their sins
3. heal their land.

Whenever a person in authority gives one a list of things to do, it’s important to look carefully at the first item on the list and the last, even though any other assignment on

this list also must be considered vital. This is especially true if the assignments are given by God.

We therefore note that the first directive is humility. No one ultimately repents who is full of pride and will not let that pride go. Nothing else on the list will happen if we refuse to humble ourselves.

Last on the list is to “turn from our wicked ways” which embodies the idea of repentance, which means to change direction. It is to go the other way.

The quiet moments we’re about to participate in represent the beginning of that turning. We can’t turn from what we won’t admit is wrong.

So here’s how we begin. The Psalmist said in Psalm 139:23-24, “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (NIV).

Elsewhere the Psalmist declared: “Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said ‘I will confess my transgressions to the Lord’ – and you forgave the guilt of my sin” (Psalm 32:5, NIV).

I’m asking all those who physically are capable of kneeling to kneel quietly in prayer now [as the keyboard is played worshipfully] for you to examine your heart and ask God to cleanse you of any personal sin. Then, quietly repent for the sins of our nation, even as Daniel did in his extensive prayer of repentance in Daniel chapter nine.

Shall we all kneel (and if you are unable to kneel, simply bow in a posture of humility where you are sitting) ...

Allow at least 3 to 5 minutes of silence.

**CONCLUSION: SAMPLE PRAYER
WHILE PEOPLE ARE YET KNEELING**

“Father, we do, indeed, ask You to hear from heaven and forgive our sins so that our land may be healed. May we never find ourselves in the condition as the Psalmist prayed in Psalm 66:18, “If I cherished sin in my heart, the lord would not have listened” but may we find ourselves rejoicing in what the Psalmist immediately declared in the following verse, “but God surely listened and heard my voice in prayer” [verse 19].

ALTERNATE OPTIONAL CONCLUSION...

[Following is the text of a prayer of repentance widely circulating throughout Christ's Body that you may wish to print in any printed program for your event, or simply copy and hand out for this specific time in your program. If you hand out copies for this specific portion of your program, it is best to distribute these copies prior to beginning the instructions leading in to your time of repentance, and then refer to them as the quiet time concludes.]

CORPORATE READING OF A PRAYER OF REPENTANCE

As we conclude this time of silent repentance, let's all stand and read the "Prayer of Repentance" printed in your program [or distributed to you earlier].

Shall we read in unison...

Almighty God, we thank You and praise You for Your unending mercy and grace poured out upon our nation. You have delivered us in times of war, reunited us after conflicts among ourselves, and filled our lives with such abundance. Your blessings overflow our borders.

Yet still, we take You for granted. We come before you now, in desperate need of Your forgiveness. We confess that the liberty You so graciously gave us has become a license to do as we please. Our culture mocks You; our highest courts are esteemed above Your Word. We've traded genuine spirituality for temporary pleasure, true virtue for hollow celebrity. We teach our children self-indulgence yet stand mystified at the blood on their hands. We lust after material things, yet wonder why our souls are empty.

Revive us, O LORD. Your Presence is our only hope. Impart to us Your passion for good over evil. As we humble ourselves and seek Your face, forgive us O God, and heal us. Make us one, that America would be the land You envisioned from the beginning...a beacon of hope lifted to the world, a people free to serve You and one another, in genuine love.

In the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—in the name of Jesus we pray.

...And all God's people said, AMEN!