

How to pray for a city/town

The majority of the world's population live in large cities today. By the year 2010 three out of every four people will live in a city. Large cities, and even towns, have their own character, make-up and history. How do I pray for the city/town I live in? The following two books are worthwhile reading if you really want to intercede for your city/town: *Taking our cities for God* by John Dawson (*1), and *Strategy for cities* by John Dawson and Linda Cowie. (*2)

- Before you can start praying for a city meaningfully, you have to do some research first. The best way would be if a whole team of researchers could start collecting and categorising information, e.g.
 - the history of origin, the founder and the course of history;
 - which churches are there and how many people are involved in a church;
 - which sects are there;
 - which false religions are active and are there any temples or places of worship;
 - what is the purpose of existence of the city and what is it specifically known for;
 - what specific social groups are in the city;
 - what the population composition is like;
 - what social welfare tendencies are observable;
 - who the present VIP's are;
 - which bodies, or persons are in charge of the city's economy;
 - any other relevant information.
- This information is necessary to pray for a city meaningfully, and to be able to determine where Satan has strongholds. Don't move past this point too quickly. Be thorough in this respect and you will save yourself years of aimless and fruitless prayer.
- There are territorial spirits that live and work in specific geographical areas. These evil spirits (and those who gave them the right to erect their strongholds) must be identified in order to be able to pray for the demolition of these strongholds.
- Read the local newspapers and remain informed of what goes on in your city, so that you can know what to pray for.
- Start prayer groups in order to intercede systematically for the city. It will be necessary to teach people about spiritual warfare and intercession. Intercessors must learn to pray from their position of power in Christ and to stand against the strongholds of the Evil One. Bear the following in mind:
 - Don't think you can tackle a city on your own. Try to involve as many churches and especially prayer groups in this matter.
 - Specifically pray for the right person to take the lead in the prayer action and to co-ordinate it.
 - Mobilise as many people and groups as possible to pray.
 - Never try to take over different prayer groups. Allow each to retain their character, but ask them to pray with you for this matter.
 - The principle of Prayer Triplets can be very effective in getting people involved in interceding for the city.
- Use 2 Chr.7:14 to pray for the city and its people: "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 will heal their land."

- Pray for the spiritual leaders of the various churches in the city.
- Pray for the persons in policy-making positions and others in positions of authority in the city. The following areas are relevant:
 - politics
 - media
 - religion
 - culture
 - economics or business sector
 - justice
 - protective services (police and prison services)
 - health services (doctors, hospitals)
 - education (schools, colleges, universities)
 - art, recreation, sports
 - municipality
 - government
- The guidance of the Holy Spirit is very important in this matter. The Lord has a plan and strategy for the city. Make sure that you know what God's strategy is and follow it. Before the city can be reached for God, special efforts must be made to achieve unity and sanctification within the church. Do not act before clear guidance is received from the Lord. This is no child's play. Don't just start to rebuke Satan and try to take authority over demonic forces before the victory has been won and the Holy Spirit has guided you to do so.
- Pray for a spirit of prayer and supplication. Especially look at Scripture like Ez.22:30-31 and Is.62:6-7. You can not pray for the city unless you love the city and its people. Ask the Lord for a prayer in your heart like John Knox's when he prayed: "Lord give me Scotland or I die!" "And I will pour out...a spirit of grace and supplication" (Zech 12:10). "I have posted watchmen on your walls, o Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the Lord give yourselves no rest and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth" (Is.62:6-7). "I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so that I would not have to destroy it but I found none" (Ez.22:30).
- It will undoubtedly be necessary to fast and pray when you start praying for a city.
- Pay special attention to the strongholds of the Evil One in the following areas:
 - political (government/authority) strongholds - and for satanic inspired laws
 - cultural strongholds - for satanic inspired attitudes and inclinations
 - religious strongholds - for satanic inspired faith
 - materialistic strongholds - for satanic inspired ideals
 - ideological strongholds - for satanic inspired philosophies and ideologies (communism; humanism; materialism)
 - personal strongholds - for satanic inspired lifestyles (personal sin, sinful thoughts, sinful emotions, sinful attitudes, sinful behaviour patterns)
 - social strongholds - for satanic inspired behaviour patterns