

Please Pause for This Post-Election Prayer

After this bitterly divisive election, the Lord's Prayer can reunite us. Please pray it often.

Election 2012 was a bitter contest. As of Wednesday night—when my home state of Florida was still counting ballots—President Obama had 59.6 million votes compared to Mitt Romney's 56.9 million. Democrats still control the Senate and Republicans still control the House. The political gridlock of the past four years is here to stay.

We are a very, very divided nation. We are split on so many levels—young vs. old, urban vs. rural, white vs. black and white vs. Hispanic. Pollsters say Obama received fewer votes from white males than any president in recent elections. News analysts already are using terms like “the 50-50 nation” to describe our polarized condition.

What is sad, to me, is that these divisions have fractured the church. I know of congregations where large numbers of African-Americans walked out because pastors urged their members to vote for Romney. Some Christians saw Romney as the only biblical values choice, while others couldn't stomach the notion of a Mormon in the White House. Other Christians pushed for Obama because they believe his health care policies reflect Christian values.

So where do we go now? Is there any possible way for God's people to come together? Or are we stuck in the same spiritual gridlock as our politicians?

On the night of the election, as I pondered the depth of our national crisis, my heart was drawn to the profound authority of the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13 (NASB). I felt the Holy Spirit nudging me to meditate on these words because they have

the power to recalibrate our hearts and to refocus our priorities. I encourage you to say the Lord's prayer often during this troubling season.

"Our Father, who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name."

This is a cry for God alone to be glorified. Lord, we don't want any man, any president or any political party to take the glory that belongs to You. During the next four years of President Obama's term, we want America to worship the true God. Let Your name be exalted!

"Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

Lord, we want America to continue to be a place where the gospel of Jesus Christ is preached freely. Regardless of what happens on the political or economic front, may our churches grow, may millions come to know salvation and may increasing numbers of missionaries go to the nations from the United States. Let a glorious outpouring of the Holy Spirit occur in this season!

"Give us this day our daily bread."

Lord, our economy is troubled and so many Americans are jobless, homeless and hungry. We are still one of the most prosperous nations on earth, but we've been guilty of greed. Give us grateful hearts for Your provision, and give our leaders divine wisdom to know how to solve our financial problems before our national debt crushes us.

"And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."

Lord, please heal the deep divisions in Your church. Bring us together. Give us the grace to forgive. Let old and young respect each other. Let blacks, whites and Hispanics embrace each other. Help us to peel off our bumper stickers and remove

the barriers that separate us. And bring pastors together across racial and denominational lines so we can experience true reconciliation.

“And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”

Lord, have mercy on the United States. We are helpless without You. There are foreign powers who hate us, and terrorists who want to destroy our cities. There are also anti-Christ forces working in our nation at this moment—even within our government—and they want to lead us into spiritual captivity. Expose their plots, frustrate their plans and protect us from our enemies.

“For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.”

Lord, we acknowledge that You are the Supreme Ruler over this nation, regardless of who occupies the White House. We worship You as King. Cause our president, our first lady, our senators, our congressmen, our judges and all bureaucrats in Washington to know that You alone are God. May they humble themselves before You, respect Your laws and fear Your judgments.

Amen. Whether we live in red states or blue states, and whether we watch Fox or CNN, surely we can all agree with these words.

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