

/// 7-1 /// **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH CIVIC LEADERS**

We believers have been pushed into a corner –preferably to be forgotten by society.

A. The Pastor as the Central Community Focus

Now we, the leaders of God, need to bring the church back to become **the central focus** in our communities. The Orthodox church is doing a splendid job of making their church buildings a focus point for public attention. We don't put the focus on buildings, but you are after all God's present day Moseses, Joshuas, Daniels, Elishas, Habakkuks and Zechariahs.

You, yourself, must become a focus person for public attention, public influence for Christ and for the Gospel sake. Building relationships with government leaders is crucial.

Remember the Bible! It says that government officials are God's servants (Rom 13:4). Zechariah shows that in God's sight you, a spiritual leader, and the physical government leader are the same in God's sight. In the Lord's eyes, you are partners together. You are together to bring about a spiritual Ukraine.

Note that you as a pastor are like a burnt stick rescued from the fire. Compare yourself to Joshua in Zech chap. 3. Then compare your government leader to Zerubbabel in chap. 4. You will note that it is spiritual power in the **secular** leader that brings social reform. You the church leader are called by God to bring local and national reform. In-depth prayer for your government colleagues is a crucial beginning.

B. You the Power Bringer

Today we will limit our discussion of relationships to prayer.

How many officials do you know by name? This is so very crucial. Throughout scripture God is concerned with details. Bringing a government leader before the throne of God by name indicates your sincerity, your compassion. Praying by name indicates that you have become involved, you not only have sympathy, but you have empathy. The Government consists of human beings, people just like you. They have feelings, frustrations, make mistakes and so on. They also have wives and children that they love. Family members with hurts and illnesses.

Under past regimes some us were almost forced perhaps to become critical, and negative but the time has now come to be positive, to remember the words of our Lord Jesus.

/// 7-2 /// The **merciful** are blessed Matt 5: 7
I desire mercy and am calling sinners. Matt 9:13

I desire **mercy**, don't condemn the innocent. Matt 12: 7
Shouldn't you have had **mercy** on your fellow servant. Matt 18:33

Justice, **mercy**, faithfulness are crucial. Matt 23:23
Knowledge of salvation through tender **mercy**. Luke 1:77,78
The one who had **mercy** did it right, go do likewise. Luke 10:36, 37

Time has come to develop a positive loving interest and relationship with our government leaders.

/// 7-3/// How often do you spend time in prayer for government officials — as suggested by Scripture? _____

How much time do you usually spend weekly; _____minutes... / ½ hour... / ...hour .../ ...more ...— in prayer for Government leaders? (*circle one*)

Remember the following types of government leaders: good ones, bad ones, evil ones, Christian ones, unbelieving ones. Do some Bible research and find out how to pray for each type.

C. Anointing Government officials with God's power

Perhaps the following may be of help in your merciful praying for God's appointed government leaders. This suggestion follows a weekly plan. I and my family personally used this for nearly 20 years. It has been a blessing to our family members.

- Monday pray for your local government, the leaders of your village or of your city. Who is the mayor of your town? The Bible says we should pray for our government leaders. Learn their names, so you can fulfill this Bible passage. Know the man's family. Perhaps the Lord wants to use you as an instrument of help and healing like Jesus was to the Roman officials and rulers. So before you are going to be able to pray effectively do a bit of homework.
- On Tuesday pray for the provincial leaders or regional leaders. I hope that soon you will know the names of those leaders and what they are doing. What is his responsibility? What is she doing? You should know their names and their jobs. Those are the two minimum things to know in order to pray intelligently. Add family information if possible.
- On Wednesday pray for the national leaders, that is, the president, prime minister and parliament members, their friends and families. Try to obtain a list of all parliament members. Pray for different government departments: education, religion, natural resources, economy, etc.
- On Thursday pray for another country that has a special need. Focus particularly on political happenings. Check the news!
- On Friday you can pray for neighboring countries; White Russia, Russia, Turkey, Romania, Moldova, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland. You do not need to pray for all these countries every Friday. Some Fridays you pray for one or two and another Friday you pray for others.

D. Casting your bread upon many waters

Let us illustrate a few items. In every province there are judges. Many of the judges do not give good judgment because they are not believers and they belong to the system of this world. There are also the highway police; they are part of the federal system. Who prays for the highway police? You as pastor can provide a Godly example for our believers and teach them to pray. Locally you have policemen also. The Bible says you should be praying for them. The Bible says the local government official is the minister of God (Rom 13:4). Does the Bible mean that we should pray for your government leaders except when you live in Ukraine? Why do we have troubles? We are God's leaders. We are the ones to pray and bring about a good land! It is not just the president's fault. If the president does not perform well we should ask ourselves, "Have I prayed for him as I should?" If a government person performs well it is our duty to praise God for it and be thankful.

It is our responsibility because the Bible says we are supposed to pray for our country and government! All over Ukraine in different provinces there are army bases. Are you praying for those soldiers at the army bases?

We the believers are God's instruments to bring righteousness and justice to our country.

There are many more things you can do to develop relationships with government leaders, but perhaps prayer is the very first and the most important.

Good, effective, worthwhile prayer takes a lot of work, but God promises, "If my people pray, I will heal the land." 2 Chron. 7:14

Let's believe that! Hallelujah! Let us believe that! AMEN!