



24-7 PRAYER
PRAYER, MISSION AND JUSTICE



24-7 Prayer Scotland Referendum Prayer Pack

“They pray as if it all depends on God and live as if it all depends on them” - The Vision Poem

This is an exciting time to be praying for Scotland. It is an exciting time to be praying for all of the United Kingdom actually. No matter the outcome of September's vote, Scotland will be affected. All of the United Kingdom will be affected.

The history, formation, future of an entire nation is in question and we as God's people have the opportunity to be a part of this in a way that goes beyond the influence of a ballot box. Jesus said in Matthew 18:19-20, *“When two of you get together on anything at all on earth and make a prayer of it, my Father in heaven goes into action. And when two or three of you are together because of me, you can be sure that I'll be there.”* (The Message)

When we watch the news, listen to the radio, catch newspaper headlines, it is easy to become distracted by and focused on the negatives and begin to feel overwhelmed, hopeless, even fearful. Yet we have the ear of the King of Kings and He loves it when we choose to partner with Him through prayer and He will truly “go into action” when we come together with one another before Him to seek His heart and His intervention.

Markus was just 13 when he heard about a weekly prayer meeting at the church of St Nicholas in Leipzig, Germany. They were gathering to pray for an end to oppression. What had begun as a Monday night prayer meeting of a few faithful Christians had grown to 70,000 interceding for peace. The government threatened to shut the church down, Doctors even set up an emergency clinic expecting the prayer meeting would end in bloodshed. But instead of violence exactly one month later Markus saw the answer to all of their prayers as the Berlin Wall came down.

“So many people were expressing their protest in prayer that the State was preparing for war... [with] guns on the roofs of churches and tanks in the streets. But when the Berlin wall eventually fell one communist official made a surprising admission to a journalist: 'We were prepared for every eventuality,' he said, 'but not for candles and not for prayers.'” - Excerpt from Red Moon Rising by Pete Greig

The Kingdom Manifesto – the Beatitudes

In Matthew 6, Jesus says to pray like this – ***“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”***

In the previous chapter, Chapter 5, Jesus has given them a “manifesto” for this kingdom He is speaking of here. We know this manifesto as The Beatitudes.

As we pray for Scotland, the best prayer we can pray is for God’s will to be done and His kingdom to come in every part of this nation, just as it is in heaven.

But what does His kingdom look like in Scotland; especially as we know He does not establish His kingdom through political games and military force, but rather through the quiet, often invisible, gentle yet unyielding transformation of our hearts?

To begin to get a picture of how to more specifically pray for God’s kingdom to come in Scotland, we need to remember that in the Bible when God speaks about blessing, He is not promising blessing just *towards* a person/nation/people, as much as He is promising blessing *through* that person/nation/people.

So as we come to our Father and seek His heart and purposes for Scotland, we may just discover that the establishment of His kingdom in this nation is not just for Scotland herself, but to further the establishing of His kingdom across the earth *through* Scotland.

Therefore, these prayer station ideas are less focused on the referendum and more focused on God’s kingdom and purposes being established here in Scotland.

1. ***“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:3***

When God sets up His kingdom on this earth, it is through the poor in spirit – those who have recognized that they have nothing in and of themselves that make them worthy of inheriting the kingdom. That it has nothing to do with being a “good” person but everything to do with Jesus and the goodness and love of the Father. We see this modeled in the story of the prodigal son, when he realizes his own efforts have brought him only poverty and he returns to his father with humility, only to be embraced and restored to sonship.

Set up a chair - if possible, a “dad” sort of chair, big and cosy. Place some paper and pens beside the chair along with some copies of “The Father’s Love Letter”, found at <http://www.fathersloveletter.com/text.html>. Encourage people to sit in the chair and imagine sitting in the Father’s lap, listening to His Father’s heart for Scotland and then pray The Father’s Love Letter over Scotland. Or if God gives other prayers, they can write those on the available paper. Pray for Scotland to have revelation of her identity as the sons and daughters of God and to return to their Father’s waiting arms.

2. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." Matthew 5:4

Maybe you have heard the term "identificational repentance." When we see the pain, the evil, the hopelessness in those around us, and are continuously bombarded with it through the media, we can try to separate ourselves from it, desensitize ourselves to it. But Jesus promises here that when we allow ourselves to be affected by it, to identify with the sin and the pain of our fellow human beings and the pain of the Father's heart, we will be comforted and be able to give comfort to others.

"...if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

Set up a cross and put words like "Love", "Joy", "Hope", "Peace", "Identity", "Comfort", "Healing", etc on the cross. Have scraps of paper and pens nearby and encourage people to identify with the flaws, the sins, the pain of Scotland and write those things on the bits of paper, bringing them to and laying them at the foot of the cross, pausing after to receive God's comfort, joy, peace, hope.

3. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Matthew 5:5

Meekness is "controlled power," it is power that is controlled by love and is used to serve the best interests of others, absent of self-seeking and self-promotion. Jesus and then the New Testament Church demonstrated how this type of power is unstoppable because those wielding this power of meekness can be trusted to inherit the earth and not ruin it.

There are many from Scotland throughout the ages who have wielded great influence and changed lives all over the world for the better because they walked in such meekness. Examples such as the Olympian and missionary Eric Liddell, the revivalist Duncan Campbell, the African explorer and missionary David Livingstone, the US Senate Chaplain Peter Marshall whose simple, heart-felt prayers brought conviction and transformation to the hearts of politicians.

Maybe your church knows such people. Missionaries in Malawi, your community youth worker, a care worker who has chosen little pay to make the final days of the elderly as pleasant as possible...

Place a Scotland map and a World Map side by side on a wall/cork board, etc and place drawing pins where your church is located and wherever there are those your church knows/supports/prays for then attach strings from your location to the various locations and encourage prayers to be written on post-it notes for those "meek" people and place the post-it notes around the maps. If you need examples of Scottish people today serving the best interests of others within Scotland and around the world, go to

http://www.tearfund.org/en/about_you/around_the_uk/scotland/ ;

<http://www.opendoorsuk.org/scotland/>

4. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied." Matthew 5:6

Perhaps another way we could say this is "Blessed are those who are not content to let things remain as they are but long and ache to see the presence, the rule and reign, the character and person of Jesus to be made manifest in every corner of the earth, in every corner of every society and people and have the drive and determination to be part of it." This is about the combination of righteousness and justice with mercy and grace, justice that is not just about law, but also about compassion; justice that is not just about an individual's rights, but about the good of everyone.

This "righteousness" is about the "small" issues, like our secret heart attitude towards the beggar we pass on the street and the "big" issues, like the fast-growing industry of human slavery and sex trafficking.

If possible, set up some sort of scales or see-saw sort of thing entitled "Righteousness" then call one side "Justice" and the other side "Compassion."

Have some small stones or even just bits of paper and encourage people to write prayers on them for the Scottish government's decisions in regards to justice and compassion related issues, both at home and internationally, then place the prayers in/on the scales. Encourage people to pause and allow God to change their attitudes and move their hearts with compassion for these issues as well and then write prayers accordingly and place them in the scales.

You can have a few fact sheets lying beside the scales regarding poverty in Scotland, homelessness, trafficking within and without the UK, persecution of Christians in other nations, fair trade related issues, abuse and/or oppression related issues, etc. For information both locally and internationally, as well as for ideas to inspire people to not just pray but act, check out the following websites:

<http://www.tearfund.org>; <http://www.opendoorsuk.org>; <http://www.cashforkids.uk.com>;
<http://www.oxfam.org.uk>; <http://www.stopthetraffik.org>; <http://www.worldvision.org.uk>;
<http://www.24-7prayer.com/just24-7>; <http://www.livinggenerously.com>;
<http://www.teenchallenge.org.uk/locations/scotishteam.html>

5. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy." Matthew 5:7

The very definition of mercy suggest extending grace, kindness, goodness to one who is not only undeserving but has hurt or offended. Another way we could translate this verse is "Blessed are those who forgive those who sin against them, for they shall be forgiven."

When we reflect on the history of Scotland, we can see many opportunities for forgiveness to be extended, mercy to be shown. If we want God's kingdom to come and be established in and through this nation, forgiveness must become a part of Scotland's make-up, for it is a defining trait of this heavenly kingdom.

Set up a clear jug filled $\frac{3}{4}$ way with water and place a bowl of fizzy tablets, such as vitamin C tablets, beside the jug of water. Encourage people to allow God to search their hearts in this area of forgiveness as a nation and a people. Who does He want them to forgive? It could be political rifts, religious rifts, family rifts. When they feel ready to let go of that thing and forgive, extend mercy, they drop the tablet into the jug of water and as they watch the tablet dissolve, they allow the Holy Spirit to dissolve any negative feelings/attitudes that may have been within them. Again, this is a choosing to identify with the pain and wrongs of our nation, even if they don't necessarily feel personal.

6. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Matthew 5:8

Another way we could possibly say this is "Blessed are those with a singleness of heart devotion and focus, for they will see God clearly."

Life is filled with distractions, pulls, demands on our hearts, emotions, mind, energy, time, priorities – and it all often seems so complicated, choices seem far from black and white, and God can feel distant, His counsel vague and unclear. How often do we long for greater simplicity in life?

Jesus said to come to Him when we are weary, to yoke ourselves to Him and walk in rhythm with Him at the pace He sets for us and we would know His rest. Scotland is a nation that is desperate for the rest and peace of God, desperate for clarity, simplicity and lack of confusion.

Create a really comfy, cosy corner; either using bean bags and cushions and blankets or a sofa and cushions. Have the Scripture Matthew 11:28-30 printed up for people to meditate on and some dark sunglasses or even prescription specs available along with a map/silhouette drawing of Scotland and pens. Have them read the Scripture then put on the glasses and try to read it again, thinking how the glasses represent all the distractions in our lives, the things we try to fill and satisfy ourselves with that just leave us more tired. Invite them to then rest in God's presence. Maybe have an Mp3 player and headphones available with instrumental music playing (Bethel Music's album 'Without Words' is great for this).

Encourage them that, after they have rested, whatever God speaks to them, for Scotland or even for them personally, to write it on the map/drawing as a prayer over Scotland.

7. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." Matthew 5:9

In His "High Priestly" prayer, Jesus prayed to His Father, "*I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one – I in them and you in me – so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.*"

Often times a re-occurring negative points to a great purpose of God that is the exact opposite of the negative. Scotland is a land that has been torn apart again and again by disagreements, differences, greed and hunger for power, and misunderstandings. Imagine what of God's nature and love could be seen by the world through a unified Scotland, or at least through a unified Scottish Church?

In The Vision Poem it says, "The vision is Jesus." Imagine the people of Scotland gathered around Jesus. As they all draw closer to Jesus what happens? They all draw closer to one another, until they are standing shoulder to shoulder, like family gathered around the one we all love.

Place a cross or something that represents Jesus on the floor and then using a coloured tape that can be written on or paper strips that are taped down, place the strips in a circle around the cross, the outward ends wider apart, the inward ends closer together, similar to a childish drawing of the sun. Have people write prayers on the strips for greater unity within Scotland, specifically within the Scottish Body of Christ, that God's purposes for this nation to draw people to Him will be accomplished.

8. "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." Matthew 5:10-12

We live in a nation where we are still free to worship and pray publicly. Yes, we may experience some "persecution" or mockery, but we are not oppressed.

This is a great opportunity to encourage people to think on the good things about Scotland, to thank God for the freedom we do know and have here.

Cover a wall or part of a wall with lining paper and place coloured markers beside it. Have some musical instruments beside it as well. Encourage people to make this a "Worship Wall" and fill the paper with their prayers of thankfulness and gratitude for the freedom we have in this nation and all the good things they appreciate about this beautiful country.

Invite them use their voices and the instruments as well.

This would also be a good place to set out some information about Open Doors in Scotland (<http://www.opendoorsuk.org/scotland/>) and have people pray specifically for Christians in other nations around the world who are persecuted and oppressed for their faith.

Have a strips of paper, pens and staplers set out and have people write their prayers for these Christians and for Open Doors on the paper strips then staple them around each other, creating a paper chain. Encourage people to pray that Scotland can have a role to play in bringing hope and encouragement to these Christians around the world.

* Isaiah 58 is a brilliant Scripture that really complements The Beatitudes and is also worth giving thought and prayer to as we pray for Scotland and the upcoming Referendum.

If you have further questions or you create some prayer stations around the Referendum and Scotland as a nation that work really well for your church or community, please get in touch! We would love to hear from you and want to try to support and resource you all that we can! Just e-mail Debbie Meehan at debbie.meehan@24-7prayer.com of Crystal at crystal.cryer@24-7prayer.com.

We hope this pack is a blessing to you and your church/community and we look forward to hearing your stories of how God spoke to and through you!

Every blessing,

The 24-7 Prayer Scotland Team