

Transformation through appreciation

What can we do about the spirit of division in our country? Turn towards and appreciate one another! Transformation happens when we allow real, authentic encounters with other people. When we meet each other just as we are. Welcome the glance of the other person which releases something in us that we cannot release on our own; and the other person needs to welcome our glance. This helps us both to connect. Too often we look at each other to find what might be wrong in us. But this in itself gets us nowhere. It is time for us to discover the "gold" that God has put in each one of us. Then we will become rich. This is not about flattery, but genuine amazement at who my counterpart really is. We discover ourselves in them and they discover themselves in us, because we are a reflection of one another, even when we think we are fundamentally different. When I value someone in this way, when I value and respect them and meet what is in them with my attention and kindness, when I look at them with love, then a transformation begins in both of us, then strength and beauty finally emerge. Yes, creative power is released that is able to create something new! And suddenly we are making a decisive contribution to transformation, restoration, healing, and recovery within our society.

The prerequisite for this is that we also value ourselves, who we are, and what God has put in us – deep within our hearts! We are infinitely precious and we must also recognize it in this way. What you carry within you is enormously valuable. The world is literally waiting for you to step out because it cannot do without you! It needs the light and revelation of God that you carry within you. We quickly think: "What can I do? What difference can my prayer make? Why should my contribution be so important?" However, we are not able to assess what God is actually doing through our lives. Therefore: the greatest thing we can do for this world is to be completely ourselves.

In the future, we will understand more and more clearly that all our lives are mysteriously connected. Ever closer interaction and working with God and with each other is the answer to many of our nation's questions. Each of us contributes something essential to the overall picture. We have all been woven into something larger by God and are thus an essential part of how God will renew this world.

Alexander Schlüter

After the state elections in the east of Germany

In Thuringia, Saxony (1st Sept.) and Brandenburg (22nd Sept.), a new state parliament will be elected this month. If the BSW and AfD "progressive" parties actually achieve the election results predicted in the range of the current polls and become the strongest political power in one or more states, the formation of new parliamentary majorities could become a major challenge. The party landscape would not remain defined by the previous constellations. For months now, the enormous tensions in the discussion about the erection of "firewalls" have been evident, but also in the growing gap between politicians and voters who have been considered as being on the right-wing edge. The wounds of defamation and exclusion have been inflicted and the distrust of the established parties has steadily grown.

The calls for a change of direction and for political renewal are unmistakable. In this situation, in prayer, we are seeking God's counsel and place our entire country under a canopy of peace.

Prayer:

We are invited to come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly council, (Hebrews 12:22ff). Let us first honour God for the plans he has for our country of Germany! Our worship reaches deeply into the foundation of our country. Here, in all these changes, our country stays anchored in the eternal counsel of God. (Psalm 33:11ff).

We invite the Holy Spirit to "hover" over chaos in our country and speak light into darkness. (Genesis 1:1ff). We invite the fire of God to come in power, to clear and to firmly close off those areas where division reigns. Together we stand before God to seek his advice. Along which paths does God want to go with our country? How does He want to unite our country?

What paths of renewal does he want to pursue? We pray for protection over all state elections and His leadership in all the coalition negotiations. That ways will be found that can unite our country again and that room will be given to a spirit of renewal.

Alexander Schlüter

Terrorist attack in Solingen

The multiple knife murders in Solingen are currently shaking our country to the core. These murders highlight the danger posed by radicalised individuals involved in Islamist terrorism, but also draw attention in a very dismaying way to the ongoing blatant deficiencies in the enforcement of the constitutional rules and regulations in asylum law. There is a serious loss of trust when people seeking protection in our country commit crimes and murder. A further loss of trust is associated with the state not consistently exercising its exclusively authorized role in the use of power with police to protect the population. The asylum policy is complex and we want to be a country that serves all nations with compassion. At the same time, the safety of the population, including that of the migrants living peacefully in our country, must not be put at risk.

Prayer:

- **That grace and truth, justice and law meet in the issues concerning migration and asylum and that God leads our country to act righteously. (Psalm 85:6-13; Psalm 33:5)**
- **For the political will in our government to enforce existing law and not allow any negligence. (Romans 13:4)**

Alexander Schlüter

Identity and our response to the world

The feeling of no longer being able to identify with one's own birth gender has increased dramatically among children and young people in recent years. At the same time, there have been increasing reports of people who have taken the path back to their birth gender after having undergone gender reassignment surgery. These are tales that involve people searching for identity and acceptance - in a world that sets certain ideal character traits and assigns stereotypical requirements or expectations for being a man or a woman that such people do not meet or do not feel capable of meeting, or are simply not pleasing to them.

Gender dissatisfaction, which has always been common at the beginning of puberty, but which in most cases decreases with age, is now often elevated to an indication of "trans"-identity, due to the influence of current social media and politics. Drug treatments that actively intervene in sexual development are sometimes administered at the beginning of puberty - often with far-reaching negative consequences.

According to the medical journal (in Germany), 80 percent of people who undergo gender reassignment surgery are women. Especially for young women, the decisive factor is often not the desire to be a man. It is more about not wanting to be a woman with all the characteristics attributed to a female. Likewise, it is mainly women who, after medical or surgical treatment, decide to turn back to their birth gender (approx. 70%), because they realise that a "different body" also does not make them feel any happier. In fact, the longing for identity and acceptance remains unfulfilled very deep inside and indeed may even be increased.

In Jesus, God has clearly shown the answer to the longing for identity and acceptance, that every person feels, in a practical and profound way. God's love for every single person never changes. And it is not based on our behaviour, our gender, our appearance, or our personality traits, but solely on God himself and his nature as love itself. God's love is undeserved. It is our starting point and gives us dignity, identity, and acceptance. What if, seized by God's love, as shown in Jesus, we were to be a message and testimony of this love through our lives, our words, our love, and acceptance of ourselves as His creation?

Prayer:

- **Where do I need a deeper revelation of God's love, of my identity as his child and of my acceptance? (2 Thessalonians 3:5; 1 John 3:1; 1 John 4:9)**
- **For the "sons" of God to be revealed as living messengers of God's saving love. (Romans 8:19)**
- **For children, young people, and adults who suffer from sexual dissatisfaction, to encounter the love of God and to turn to him. (John 3:16; Psalm 139:1-3+13-17)**

Tanja Frank

Berlin - City of Unity

We are used to thinking in terms of problems and less in terms of solutions. Thinking in terms of problems means remaining stuck in old thought processes. A major portion of our energy is thus used up in analysis, evaluation, judgment, and blame.

"Problems can never be solved with the same way of thinking that created them." (Albert Einstein).

When we think of Berlin, we could bring up quite a few problems. But let us approach the capital city of our country in prayer in a completely different way - with a creative view

that looks to the future! Will you join us? Not just the Berliners themselves, but all of us in Germany. Because Berlin is the capital for all of us.

The Holy Spirit invites us to be an "architect of the future" and to look lovingly at Berlin with him, to plan and design with him.

Many of you know that Berlin has received a mandate for unity from God. That could be a first clue for our prayer.

The following questions may help you: What does a city that has been renewed by Jesus look like? How does synchrony in hearts and thoughts of people arise and how does that affect a city?

Now "draw" a picture of Berlin as a City of Unity in your mind together with the Holy Spirit as you pray.

Alexander Schlüter

Israel

Many of us are currently concerned with the questions:

How should we pray for Israel?

Pray for the war to continue or for an end to the war?

And if for an end to the war, under what conditions for peace and what will be nature and details of any final agreements? These are legitimate questions, and yet they may not actually be the fundamental questions because they are more concerned with the external situation rather than with the internal issues.

To some extent, it is comparable to us trying to change our own behaviour without going deeply into our hearts and our minds. We try to influence things we can just see outside of ourselves and overlook something of the deeper spiritual dimension that lies behind them.

For some time now, I have been moved by the story of the prophet Elijah with regard to the crisis situation in Israel that has now lasted almost 12 months. Elijah's first step in his struggle to bring the people back to God was to restore the altar of the Lord. He built a place for worship of God, proclaiming the greatness and promises of God - and he did this in order that the people of Israel would recognise the Lord as the true God and turn from idolatry, rebellion, pride, godlessness, and the mindset of the world.

Perhaps now is the time for the "prophets" in the land, those who know and love God and are ambassadors of His Kingdom, to gather and build altars of worship and thereby pave the way for a now secular people in Israel to turn to the living God. In some places this is already happening - including where there is unity between Arab Christians and Messianic Jews.

And perhaps history is already being made in the spiritual realm. This is just one point of view and does not replace or exclude other aspects of the situation in Israel in our prayers.

Prayer:

- **For the building of altars of worship throughout the land and for unity among Messianic Jews and Arab Christians. (1 Kings 18:30,31; Psalm 133)**
- **For the people and rulers in Israel to recognise the living God and to turn away from their own ways. (1 Kings 18:37-39; 1 Timothy 2:1-4)**
- **For supernatural protection, wisdom from God and the release of the hostages. (Psalm 121; Psalm 126)**

Tanja Frank

God's blessings for your times in prayer,

Alexander Schlüter and Team