

Pray for Andrew

"We should always pray and never give up."

Luke 18:1

When I attended Andrew Brunson's trial last July, his wife, Norine, expressed to me her concern that Andrew's prolonged detention may cause us to lose heart in our prayers for Andrew's release. Sitting in the trial and spending time with believers in Turkey rekindled my passions in this regard. Now, I write with the thought that you might also benefit from a fresh perspective on Andrew's plight.

Gleanings from the Previous Trial

It was July 18, 2018. I sat in the cavernous Aliğa courtroom in Western Turkey, watching Andrew Brunson boldly testify to the Gospel of salvation and to the forgiveness he offered the Turkish officials for persecuting him without cause. It was a message that needed to be heard by everyone, I thought. I was glad so many were listening in: a group of officials and witnesses at the stand, the armed guards, and the entourage of reporters, Turkish pastors and varied observers in the aluminum bleachers in back of the courtroom. But how much better if the world could catch the spirit behind Andrew's words.

Actually, they could. It may not come from the flurry of news media that followed the hearing or from the transcribed court proceedings that will serve as public record in Turkey. I am referring rather to the influence of your life and mine as we pray for Andrew's release. Every day that Andrew is detained in Turkey and God's people pray, it is not only the American government that is being influenced to action. The God who reigns over the nations is also being stirred to action, hopefully to free Andrew, potentially to impact Turkey, but certainly to change each of us. Our prayers are His pen through which He can transcribe truths on our hearts, such as the realization that:

1. Andrew and the pastors in that courtroom set a high bar for boldness that should inspire us to be more fearless as we live for the Lord with all of our freedoms. In the courtroom, the pastor who interpreted for me had already offered himself as a witness in Andrew's case. He knew that in so doing, he put himself under the careful scrutiny of a government that is making it very difficult to be a Christian. Each of the Turkish pastors present with me had already spent time behind bars because of their faith. At any point, one or all might face prison for the rest of their lives. And Andrew, if not released, faces a 35-year prison term. Interceding for such courageous believers can birth courage in our hearts.
2. Andrew's predicament can also remind us to pray for Turkey. Several days of conversations I had with Turkish believers revealed a deep-seated concern that Andrew's case may be evidence of a growing anti-Christian sentiment in the country. According to accounts I heard, Turkish citizens who have offered even a mere suggestion on social media that they are not happy with the current situation in Turkey, are often required to begin reporting every few days to a government office confirming that they are fully supportive of the

government. One more slip and they may find themselves joining company with more than 150,000 others who have been detained or imprisoned on various charges since the attempted overthrow of the government in July of 2016. Surely as we pray for Andrew, we must pray for Turkey.

3. When we pray for Turkey, we will quickly find ourselves praying for the world. Turkey is a gateway to the East and to the West. It was originally from Turkey that Christianity was launched around the globe. It was there also that the first seven councils of the church were held. Oddly, Turkey, the cradle of early Christianity, is now one of the least Christian countries in the world. There are nearly as many active churches in the small town from which I write, Hendersonville, North Carolina, U.S.A., as there are in the entire nation of Turkey — around 250. Depending on how one defines Christian, Turkey is somewhere between 0.4 % and 0.2% Christian.

The stark contrast between what was and what is may seem depressing, but it should actually give us great hope. An old Korean proverb says, “Where water once flowed, it can flow again.” Let us pray for God to bless the beautiful land of Turkey and all of its people, offering petitions for its government with this realization: what God has done before God can do again. May Turkey continue as a democracy, may all peoples be welcome there, and may the Church flourish.

Praying for Andrew may cause us to recognize how quickly we may lose our freedoms if we don't stand strong in our faith. Sadly, the Church in America tends to be influenced by its culture more than the Church influences our culture. We must once again heed the messages found in the letters to the seven churches (Revelation 2-3), which were situated in Turkey. Only partially uncovered ruins remain in each location. But the truths in those letters live on. They call us to be genuine Christians, willing to follow Christ even when things are tough, even when we face slander, opposition, and difficulty.

Conclusions for Today

It is natural to become discouraged in our prayers for Andrew as we experience delay after delay. It is supernatural, however, to realize that God is at work for good, even on Andrew's behalf, and that our prayers are being heard. The sovereign God who used Joseph's Genesis 39 imprisonment as part of His greater purpose can and will use Andrew's detention in ways we have not anticipated and may never fully understand. God is at work. And we must never give up.

William P. Campbell

A daily prayer guide for Andrew and Turkey for the month of October 2018 is attached and follows this article. For those who would like to deepen their Biblical understanding of God's work in Turkey as seen in the seven churches of Revelation, a free twelve-week study guide can be [downloaded here](#). William P. (Bill) Campbell is teaching elder at Hendersonville Presbyterian Church (NC), and founder and president of Scripture Awakening ([ScriptureAwakening.com](#)), which offers resources to help people read, study, and live the Scriptures.



Pray for Andrew and Turkey

31-Day Prayer Initiative • October 2018



This is a guide for prayers over Andrew Brunson and his family, and for the nation of Turkey. It is designed to last for the month of October. The first 13 days are found below, and the remainder of the month will be posted on the 14th, once we have processed news about the outcome of the October 12 trial. Andrew and Norine are called to serve Turkey, the very nation that is detaining him. Perhaps our prayers can be used by God to bring a release not only for Andrew, but also for the Gospel in Turkey.

October 1

PRAISE Read Psalm 1, and praise for the power of the Word through Bibles in Turkey.

PONDER Turkey was the cradle for the Gospel's worldwide advance. Now only a fraction of one percent believe (more info: [link](#)).

PRAY For individuals and ministries that bring Bibles into Turkey. May they be used of God to transform lives (more info: [link](#)). Pray that Andrew and Norine will find strength and comfort through God's Word.

October 2

PRAISE Read Psalm 2, and praise God for His sovereignty over the nations, even over Turkey.

PONDER The Northern Kurds live in the mountain areas near the borders of Iran and Iraq, making them difficult to reach (more info: [link](#)).

PRAY For God to bring the Gospel even to these dispersed Northern Turks. May the Lord empower believers in Turkey to be bold, despite opposition, trusting in God's sovereignty. Pray for the church Andrew pastored, Izmir Resurrection Church, to be blessed by God with strong leadership (more info: [link](#)).

October 3

PRAISE Read Psalm 7, and thank God for His protection for believers in Turkey.

PONDER There are some 65,000 Armenians in Turkey. They are 94% Christian. Fewer peoples in

the world have known greater suffering (more info: [link](#)).

PRAY Pray for the Armenian people to be protected by God and to be God's witnesses, even in Turkey. Pray for God's mercy and protection for Andrew, Norine as long as they are detained by house arrest, and pray for the three Brunson children, Jordan, Jacqueline, and Blaise, all in America, to know God's provision and peace.

October 4

PRAISE Read Psalm 8, and praise God for His majesty that will one day be displayed in heaven, with believers from all the people the world.

PONDER The Zaza-Dilmi in middle-eastern Turkey are a nomadic people with roots traced to the Medes and Persians. Almost 1.7 million strong, they are 00.00 percent Christian (more info: [link](#)).

PRAY Pray for God's majesty to be proclaimed through mission outreach, conversions, and churches planted for the Zaza-Dilmi people. Ask God to use the government-allowed Sat 7 Christian satellite television ministry in a mighty way to touch all the peoples of Turkey, even the Zaza-Dilmi ([link](#)). Pray also that God's majesty will be declared daily through the witness of Andrew and Norine, even touching the guards who watch them, and any visitors God sends to them.

October 5

PRAISE Read Psalm 9 and thank God for His wonderful deeds!

PONDER The Jesus film has had great impact worldwide, and even in Turkey (more info: [link](#); see also: [link](#)).

PRAY For God to use the Jesus film and other means to deepen the God's work around Turkey, even impacting the Arab Lebanese (see: [link](#)). Pray for Andrew and fellow pastors in Turkey who are using creative means to witness to all the peoples of Turkey.

October 6

PRAISE Read Psalm 10, and give praise to the God who brings down the arrogant and lifts up the humble.

PONDER In 1923, the "population exchange" between Greece and Turkey emptied the land of Greeks, who where and are primarily Christians. Hence the drop at the time from around 25% Christians in Turkey to about 2.5% (see: [link](#)). The nationalistic spirit

and pressure against Christianity has been unrelenting and now the percentage of Christians is below 0.25%.

PRAY That God will open the doors for the Gospel in Turkey despite the nationalistic spirit. Ask for President Erdogan to be humbled, and to enact policies that honor God and all the people he serves. Pray for God to use the almost 4,000 Greeks who remain in Turkey to be His witnesses (see: [link](#)).

October 7

PRAISE Read Psalm 11, and give praise to the God who provides refuge to His people.

PONDER There are only several hundred Hungarians in Turkey, part of a people group that is almost 90% Christian (see: [link](#)). They need God's refuge.

PRAY Pray for Hungarians to know God's grace, and to share it in Turkey. Pray also for God's protection over Andrew and the Turkish pastors who are preparing for the October 13 trial. May they know God's refuge as they travel and soon assemble to support Andrew.

October 8

PRAISE Read Psalm 12, and praise God for His help for the downtrodden and oppressed.

PONDER The American people comprise the second largest (next to Han Chinese) people group in the world. They are 77% Christian. Approximately 25,000 Americans live in Turkey (see: [link](#)).

PRAY We don't normally think of Americans as the oppressed. Andrew may seem to be the exception. However, American missionaries serving quietly in Turkey can easily become overwhelmed with a sense of oppression and even despair. Pray for God's Spirit to embolden His people, including all Americans. Pray for missionaries in Turkey to see great fruit, and for God to use Andrew's house arrest to embolden others.

October 9

PRAISE Read Psalm 13. David cries out, "How long, O Lord?" Praise God that in the right time, God's great purposes are fulfilled, even as they were in David's life, as his kingship became a picture of the coming reign of the Messiah.

PONDER God used David's trials to shape his character that he might be a witness to the nations, one from whose progeny the Messiah would come. We too cry out, as we pray for Andrew, "How long, O Lord?" May God somehow allow Messiah Jesus to be

revealed and glorified in great measure, even as a result of Andrew's detention.

PRAY The Serbians in Turkey, 9,400 strong, boast an 80% Christian population, but very few really know Jesus. It is a cultural religion. Pray for a breakthrough (see: [link](#)). Andrew is being detained, in part, due to accusations that he was reaching out to Serbs. Pray for such charges to be turned around, to be seen as a blessing, and for God to prepare strong and positive testimonies for the October 12 trial.

October 10

PRAISE Read Psalm 14, and praise God for wisdom promised for those who ask, even for the foolish.

PONDER There are 44,000 Macedonians in Turkey. As we pray for them (see: [link](#)), we can recall how God led Paul to Macedonia through supernatural guidance (Acts 16:9). May such wisdom also guide Andrew's upcoming trial. If God can guide His servants, and If God can move the heart of a king (Proverbs 21:21), God can move government leaders, court officials, and the proceedings of the trial.

PRAY Pray for God to prepare all of the players in the trial the prosecution, the defense, every witness, and Andrew himself. Pray for God's wisdom to prevail over all aspects of the trial, especially its outcome.

October 11

PRAISE Read Psalm 15, and praise God for the truth that if we are holy before God, we will be protected and helped by God.

PONDER The American government at the highest levels has been advocating and pressuring for Andrew's release. This very fact is amazing evidence that God answers the prayers of the righteous. How often does a bold Christian become such a focal point for the international media, even a flashpoint between nations? God is using Andrew as a witness.

PRAY The media around this trial can bring God great glory. Pray for all of the media representatives in the trial to be safe, and for journalists to create reports that will glorify God (see the work of Open Doors: [link](#)). Pray for Andrew to be emboldened to give a clear Gospel witness. Pray for the Turkish press and also for the guards (Jandarma) in tomorrow's trial to hear the Gospel (see: [link](#)).

October 12

PRAISE Read Psalm 16, and praise God that He will keep Andrew and all who attend the trial safe, and that God will accomplish His great purposes.

PONDER What happens in the courtroom today can impact many lives, and even nations.

PRAY Remembering that Turkey is between 7 and 9 hours head of American, depending on the time zone you live in, intercede through the day, praying for God to lead and to use this trial for His glory. Pray for Andrew and all who testify, to be bold, proclaiming God's sovereign grace (Ephesians 6:19). Pray that unless the Lord has a purpose we cannot yet see, that Andrew will be deported and his charges dropped.

October 13

PRAISE Read Psalm 17, and praise God that He enacts justice for His people.

PONDER More than 150,000 people have been imprisoned or detained in Turkey over the past few years. If Andrew has been released from Turkey, rejoice. Commit to continue praying for Turkey, and for the ministry God will open to Andrew (posts for the remainder of the month will be up tomorrow). If Andrew has not yet been released, we should also rejoice, knowing God works through difficulties (James 1:2-8). We must not give up in our prayers (Luke 18:1). Remember that a week after Andrew's July 2018 trial, he was released from prison to house arrest — perhaps largely because of our prayers. Might God surprise us by good news a week or so after this trial as well? We don't know what the future holds, but we must keep praying to the God who holds the future. Tomorrow you will find fresh guidelines posted here for Turkey (based on Andrew's current situation) to carry us through the end of October.

PRAY Pray for God's mercy to prevail for all who are imprisoned or detained in Turkey (see: [link](#)). Pray also for God's mercy and grace to reach the Turkish-speaking Kurds, who comprise the largest ethnic group in the world without a state of their own (more info: [link](#)).