



EMPTY

By David Cook

'Empty', 'vacuous', 'meaningless', 'unsubstantial', 'nothingness' - these are just some of the nouns and adjectives which my Thesaurus provides to describe the lead photo in the *Australian* of the weekend of 26-27 September, 2020.

The headline, 'Sorry, but I don't know either', above a photo of Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews swearing in on the Bible before the Hotel Quarantine Inquiry, the day before in Melbourne.

Premier Andrews is a professing Roman Catholic, yet his 'progressive social agenda' has much more in common with Marx's *Das Kapital* than with even the most liberal reading of Holy Scripture. If it is true that we get the leaders we deserve, one can only imagine what the population of Victoria has done to deserve such ineptitude in Government.

Being well-governed, which I take to mean, leaders acting with integrity, selflessness and wisdom, is a blessing which must not be taken for granted and for which we must pray.

The Apostle Paul has a respectful attitude to leaders as having, 'authority from God', 'instituted by God', 'God appointed', 'God's servant', and 'ministers of God' (Romans 13:1-7). Remember that Paul is writing in the days of Nero, a profoundly wicked Roman Emperor.

Paul tells Timothy that prayer should be made for all people, but especially for those in high positions, 'that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way' (1 Timothy 2:2). So that?

We may get on with gospel work without hindrance, for this is pleasing, 'in the sight of God our saviour, who desires all people

to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth' (1 Timothy 2:3-4).

Prayer for Monarchs, Prime Ministers, Presidents, Premiers, and Mayors ought to be a regular part of our services and devotions.

The Lord Jesus urged love for enemies and prayer for persecutors (Matthew 5:44) and in that way we show we are children of God, who loves without discrimination.

Earnest prayer must be offered for Premier Andrews that he may read and heed the book on which he swears and the same for President Trump who often makes respectful reference to the Bible.

Earnest prayer for Prime Minister Morrison that he may seek daily the wisdom which is from above.

Earnest prayer for President Xi Jinping that God may be merciful to him and open his eyes, so blind to the truth.

Earnest prayer for you and me, for us, that we may make the most of these days of liberty and share God's powerful momentous news, which alone gives hope and life to this dark world.

It is a sad photo which leads the *Australian*, because God's powerful message is so tantalisingly near the Premier. 'O God, open the Premier of Victoria's eyes and the eyes of all those listed above, that the work of building the eternal Kingdom may be facilitated!'

David Cook was the former principal of SMBC.





