

How to pray for gang-stricken areas in Cape Town

Presently, there is an unprecedented upswing of violence on the Cape Flats in the Cape Peninsula. Gangsterism is an old problem, but it has started to spiral out of control in recent years. This year, Cape Town was numbered the 4th most dangerous city in the world. When taxi-related violence is included in all this, the situation worsens. Currently, an average of 11 people die daily in gang/drugs- or taxi-related violence.

The deployment of the police, even with the help of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), will have a limited impact. They can deploy more policemen, have more police visibility, do more raids and take stronger measures against people who are involved in gangs and drug dealing. However, they can do little about the will of those who want to steal, be violent, enrich themselves, etc. Only the church has the answer: people must be born again. Revival needs to come.

Although the church is alive in Cape Town, it is still weakened in some areas. Like everywhere else, the church in Cape Town needs revival. Revival will bring people to salvation and will deal with their social needs and pain in a practical way.

The following paragraphs will provide some guidelines on how to pray for the current situation in Cape Town.

Gangs rule through fear and terror

1 John 4:18 - *There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.*

2 Timothy 1:7 - *...for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.*

The status quo in gangsterism is to rule through fear and terror, and to claim territory. You either intimidate others, or you yourself are being intimidated.

PRAY

- ❖ Pray for young children who join gangs out of fear.
- ❖ Ask the Lord to reveal Himself to young children as the One who casts away all fear by perfecting His love in us.
- ❖ Pray that they will accept this truth from a very young age.
- ❖ Pray for the safety of every household in every community, especially in key areas where most of the interaction/crossfire between gangs take place.

- ❖ Pray especially for the safety of mothers, the elderly and children, for protection from stray bullets, cross-shooting and violent/knife fighting.

Acts of violence enable gang members to improve their ranking

Psalm 5:6 ...*the Lord abhors a man of bloodshed and treachery.*

Colossians 1:20 ...*and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.*

PRAY

- ❖ Ask God's forgiveness for the bloodshed in the city as well as in prisons.
- ❖ Ask God to reveal His power of forgiveness.
- ❖ Pray for all acts of retaliation, revenge and violence between rival gangs to be stopped in the name of Jesus.
- ❖ Pray for the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to tear the veil of lies covering the eyes of young men engaged in gang violence or desiring to go up the ranks in order to get power, money and influence.
- ❖ Ask for the love of Jesus to touch them in their inner man, that they will come to know their pre-destined purpose and identity in the Lord Jesus. (Ephesians 1:17) and turn from their wicked ways.
- ❖ Pray for ex-gang members to adopt and counsel young men/teens in the Lord Jesus when they consider joining gangs to have status and power among their peers.
- ❖ Pray for every ungodly tie, link or connection that manipulates the police and authority figures in these areas, to be broken in Jesus' name. Ask for the complete destruction of all connections between the gangs and their leaders in prison, as well as the links with people in high political/governmental positions in the name of Jesus.

Gangsters find a false sense of belonging or brotherhood in the gang that they belong to

Ephesians 1:17-18 *that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you...*

PRAY

- ❖ Pray for the family units in the areas where gangsterism is rife.
- ❖ Pray for the salvation of parents, as well as their spiritual growth.
- ❖ Ask God to reveal His calling to them.

- ❖ Pray for gang members to have a personal encounter with the Lord Jesus in dreams and visions, drawing them into His presence and their destined calling within their communities for the advancing of the Kingdom of light in the darkness.
- ❖ Pray for them to become weary of the fighting and to be bold and brave enough to choose LIFE in Jesus Christ.
- ❖ Pray for God to raise up older men to interact with them, counsel them, guide them, and lead them into their identity in the Lord Jesus. That they will see their position of being seated with Jesus in heavenly places, as superseding any earthly position which they may attain.

God has a plan for each person's life

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Every young person who joins a gang and successfully goes up their ranks has enormous leadership potential and the ability to affect, influence and change a community.

PRAY

- ❖ Pray for gang leaders and members to break free from the vicious circle of violence and crime and accept God's plan for their lives.
- ❖ Pray that the Holy Spirit will touch their hearts with the compassion of the Lord Jesus. Ask that they will find themselves wanting to do good to those who are weak, to protect children, families and widows.
- ❖ Ask for them to realise how they can positively change the face of a community, and especially to shut down evil operations, doing good in all they do.

Provision and protection

Gangsterism is prevalent in the poorest communities in Cape Town. Many young children are lured into gangsterism by providing them with expensive clothes, cell phones and sometimes even food.

PRAY

- ❖ Pray for the Church in these areas to reach out to children and teach them about God and His provision.
- ❖ Pray for the Church to minister the message of the Cross, salvation, and forgiveness to those who have been affected negatively by violence, crime and poverty.
- ❖ Pray for job creation for the youth in these areas.

- ❖ Pray for bold men in the Church to step forward. Men who will make an appointment with each of the young men in the different gangs, and individually start fathering them until they are ready to accept the Lord Jesus as Saviour.
- ❖ Pray for the Holy Spirit to give local congregations strategies to meet the inward felt needs of all these young people, as well as the seasoned gangsters.
- ❖ Pray for those who have already turned to the Lord Jesus, to find proper help in the local church to transform them into what God intended for them to do.
- ❖ Pray for the Church to properly preach the gospel of the Kingdom of Jesus, in which young people can find their purpose in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- ❖ Ask for more churches to join existing prayer efforts to shut down and confuse every evil activity in every street, on every corner and at every taxi rank.
- ❖ Pray for wisdom for spiritual leaders in Cape Town as they come together to discuss how the church can be involved to help in this situation.
- ❖ Pray for enough and effective counselling opportunities for those who come into the Kingdom.
- ❖ Pray for more support structures/counselling opportunities for the many families that have already lost family members over the last couple of years.