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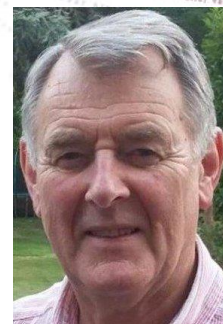
Dear praying friends in Europe –

One of the great challenges facing individuals, families, communities and nations is how do we stay in friendships that maintain good, healthy and open relationships.

Living in a society, a western society, it would appear that there are constant forces out to divide children from parents, husbands from wives, politicians from people, nation from nation, Brexit ‘leavers’ and ‘remainers’.

You may think these comments are a bit rich coming from someone living in the UK at this particular time. So as I write this I do so with as much humility as I can muster but also as a Christian understanding the teachings of Jesus in that He prayed that His people, may be one, even in the midst of separation and division in this world. (John 17:20-23)

So our calling and challenge is to take our oneness in Christ and be a prophetic voice of reconciliation in the political world, the market place, our local communities and our families. Let’s go for it!



Ian Cole

UK – EU negotiations

As I write, the Brexit negotiations are entering the next phase as the two parties endeavour to draw up agreements that are beneficial to both sides. Is this possible? We wait to see and will pray for it.

As someone on the UK side of the debate, I want to reiterate that when we voted for Brexit, it was not to leave *Europe*. We are Europeans, unless someone tugs us to the coast of America we will always be Europeans and if that happened we would certainly want to stay as Europeans.

As you know, historically we have had to be a trading nation. Islands always are. So for centuries we have traded with the rest of the world, the British Empire being at the heart of that trading.

Of course we all know that, as with all Empires, we did good things and terrible things. You also know that we created a Commonwealth of nations with whom we have traded over many years.

From a Christian point of view, not only did we trade goods but we also took the Gospel to many of these nations, often at great sacrifice and cost.

So we have old associates, old friends and from a Christian perspective many brothers and sisters around the world.

Please also pray

- May God help to avoid a trade war between the USA and the EU (and other countries). There are only losers in the end.
- for Italy in the process of forming a new government.

As Christians we are looking at all these negotiations from a Kingdom of God perspective. Our politicians tell us there is no reversal of the vote, there is no going back. So if that is the case, how do we pray?

We could rightly just pray ‘Your Kingdom come, Your will be done’. However, for Christians on both sides I believe there is more that we can pray. Because God is Almighty God, He will use whoever He will to see His purposes fulfilled.

Remember, in all our dealings, be it Nation to Nation or with people across the road, it’s for His Kingdom, His Honour and His Glory.

Prayer:

- For God’s blessing and wisdom for Prime Minister Theresa May and EU Commissioner Michel Barnier who lead the negotiations on both sides, for mutual respect and understanding and for a mutually beneficial agreement.
- That the trade deals agreed by both sides will again be a conduit for the Gospel to go to the nations.
- That the unity of the body of Christ across the whole of Europe will be maintained and strengthened.
- That we will see millions across Europe coming to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior.