

May 2, 2012

A Prayer for Jesus' Church

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Gracious Father,

- We were dead in our trespasses and sins;
- We formerly walked according to the course of this world, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath;
- We were separate from Christ, having no hope and without God;
- We were hostile toward God and incapable of subjecting ourselves to the law of God;
- But You, God, being rich in mercy made us alive together with Christ, raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus;
- By grace, we have been saved through faith - In Jesus, we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of Your grace lavished on us;
- We are Your workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works;
- Through Jesus we have access to You in one Spirit, by whom we have been sealed;
- You blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ;
- You have made known to us the mystery of Your will;
- You have given us everything pertaining to life and godliness.

Open our eyes to see the great gulf between what we once were and what we now have. Give us the wisdom, the insight, the

knowledge to appraise the breadth and depth of these exquisite gifts. Touch our eyes so that we are awed to silent wonder by the inestimable greatness of your grace. Deliver us from gloomy, bitter, pessimistic religion that chokes the life out of us. Replace our fixation on disappointments and things lost with an unfettered joy in all that we have gained in You.

Deliver us from debilitating fear. When we long for the approval of men, we will only say what the world agrees with. Give us an unbounded exuberance in all we have in You that delivers us from bondage to the fear of men. Fill us with joyous enthusiasm to unflinchingly declare what the world most needs to hear, even when our message is what the world least wants to accept.

We seem to be slouching toward Gomorrah. Our culture is rife with immorality and heartily approves those who live on its terms. As we are entertained by the world's vision of living for self, we have lost our way and yielded the moral high ground. Purify your people! Kindle our hearts with a burning love for your holiness and an unquenchable passion for purity. Deliver us from the bland kind of "spirituality" that makes us indistinguishable from those who do not know you. Deepen our love for your Son and transform us into people who are like salt on tasteless food and light in a dark place.

Our hearts ache for your return, Jesus. Come soon! We live in a world that is broken, dark, and cold. We long for the day when we will see you face-to-face, when we will eat at your table, bask in your glory, and see things finally put to rights. But until that day, supply what we need to partner well with You as You build your church. For your glory and in your name, Jesus. Amen.