

## "Bless The Lord, O My Soul!"

LORD, we are longing to draw near, may Thy Spirit draw us near. We come by the way of Christ our Mediator. We could not approach Thee, O our God, if it were not for Him, but in Him we come boldly to the throne of heavenly grace. Nor can we come without thanksgiving—thanksgiving from the heart, such as the tongue can never express. Thou hast chosen us from before the foundation of the world and this well-head of mercy sends forth streams of loving-kindness never ceasing. Because we were chosen, we have been redeemed with precious blood. Bless the Lord! And we have been called by the Holy Spirit out of the world and we have been led to obey that wondrous call which hath quickened us and renewed us, and made us the people of God, given us adoption into the divine family. Bless the Lord!

Our hearts would pause as we remember the greatness of each one of Thy favors and we would say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name." When we consider our utter unworthiness before conversion and our great faultiness since, we can but admire the riches of abounding grace which God has manifested to us unworthy ones. Bless the Lord! And when we think of all that Thou hast promised to give, which our faith embraces as being really ours, since the covenant makes it sure, we know not how abundantly enough to utter the memory of Thy great goodness. We would make our praises equal to our expectations and our expectations equal to Thy promises. We can never rise so high. We give to Thee, however, the praise of our entire being. Unto Jehovah, the God of Abraham, the God of

Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the Creator of the world, the redeemed of men, unto Jehovah be glory forever and ever and let all His people praise Him. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy.

O Lord, Thy works praise Thee, but Thy saints bless Thee and this shall be our heaven. Yea, our heaven of heavens eternally to praise and magnify the great and ever blessed God. May many a maiden this day, may many a man break forth and say, with the virgin of old, "My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit doth rejoice in God my Savior." May there be going up this day sweet incense, of praise laid by holy hands, privately upon the altar of God. May the place be filled with the smoke thereof, not perhaps to the consciousness of every one, but to the acceptance of God who shall smell a sweet savor of rest in Christ and then in the praises of His people in Him.

But, Lord, when we have praised Thee, we have to fold the wing. Yea, we have to cover the face and cover the feet and stand before Thee to worship in another fashion, for we confess that we are evil, evil in our original, and though renewed by sovereign grace, Thy people cannot speak of being clean, rid of sin. There is sin which dwelleth in us which is our daily plague. O God, we humble ourselves before Thee. We ask that our faith may clearly perceive the blood of the atonement and the covering of the perfect righteousness of Christ, and may we come afresh, depending alone on Jesus. "I, the chief of sinners am, but Jesus died for me." May this be our one hope, that Jesus died and rose again, and that for His sake we are accepted in the Beloved.

May every child of Thine have his conscience purged from dead works to serve the true and living God. May there be no cloud between us and our Heavenly Father, nay, not even a mist, not even the morning mist that soon is gone. May we walk in the light as God is in the light. May our fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ, be unquestionable. May it be fuel. May it fill us with joy. May it be a most real fact this day. May we enjoy it to the full, knowing whom we have believed, knowing who is our Father, knowing who it is that dwells in us, even the Holy Spirit.

Take away from us everything which now might hinder our delighting ourselves in God. May we come to God this day with a supreme joy. May we speak of Him as "God my exceeding joy; yea, mine own God is He." O God, give us a sense of property in Thyself. May we come near to Thee, having no doubt and nothing whatsoever that shall spoil the beautiful simplicity of a childlike faith which looks up into the great face of God and saith, "Our Father, which art in heaven."

There are those who never repented of sin and never believed in Christ and consequently the wrath of God abideth on them. They are living without God. They are living in darkness. O God, in Thy great mercy look upon them. They do not look at Thee, but do Thou look at them. May the sinner see his sin and mourn it, see His Savior and accept Him, see himself saved and go on his way rejoicing. Father, do grant us this.

Once more we pray Thee, bless Thy Church. Lord, quicken the spiritual life of believers. Thou hast given to

Thy Church great activity, for which we thank Thee. May that activity be supported by a corresponding inner life. Let us not get to be busy here and there with Martha and forget to sit at Thy feet with Mary. Lord, restore to Thy Church the love of strong doctrine. May Thy truth yet prevail. Purge out from among Thy Church those who would lead others away from the truth as it is in Jesus and give back the old power and something more. Give us Pentecost. Yea, many Pentecosts in one and may we live to see Thy Church shine forth clear as the sun and fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners.

God grant that we may live to see better days. But if perilous times should come in these last days, make us faithful. Raise up in England, raise up in Scotland, men that shall hold the truth firmly as their fathers did. Raise up in every country, where there has been a faithful church, men that will not let the vessel drift upon the rocks. O God of the Judges, Thou who didst raise up first one and then another when the people went astray from God, raise up for us still (our Joshuas are dead) our Deborahs, our Baraks, our Gideons, and Jephthahs, and Samuels, that shall maintain for God His truth and worst the enemies of Israel. Lord, look upon Thy Church in these days. Lord, revive us. Lord, restore us. Lord, give power to Thy Word again that Thy name may be glorified.

Remember the Church of God in this land in all its various phases and portions, and pour out Thy Spirit upon it. Remember the multitude of Thy people across the sea in America, prosper them, bless them with the increase of God. And wherever Thou hast a people, may Jesus dwell with them and reveal Himself to His own, for Christ's sake,

to whom be glory with the Father and with the Holy Ghost, forever and ever. Amen.