

To Be Like Christ

BLESSED art Thou, O God, teach us Thy statutes!
Because Thou art the infinitely blessed One, Thou canst impart blessing, and Thou art infinitely willing to do so, and therefore do we approach Thee with great confidence, through Jesus Christ Thy Son, whom Thou hast made blessed forevermore.

Oh! hear Thou the voice of Thy servants this day and according to Thine infinite love and wisdom answer Thou us, according to Thy riches in glory, by Christ Jesus.

First we would confess before Thee, O God, the sin we have committed, mourning over it. Touch each one's heart now with tenderness that everyone of us may lament that Thou shouldst even have a few things against us, if they be but few, for in the great love of our blessed Master He said to His churches, "Nevertheless, I have a few things against Thee." O Lord, if Thou hast so kept us by Thy grace that there have been but a few things against us, yet help us to bewail them much. O, Infinite Love, can we sin against Thee at all? How debased is our nature then! Forgive, sweet Savior, forgive sins against Thy love and blood, against Thy wounds and death, and give us Thy Spirit, O Savior, more fully, that we may live Thy life while we are here among the sons of men, for as Thou art, even so also are we in this world, and we wish the parallel to become more close and perfect every day!

Forgive those who have never felt the guilt of sin, who are living in it, who are carnally minded, who are therefore dead. O, quicken by Thy divine Spirit. Take away the

pleasure which they feel in sin. Deliver them from being the bond slaves of it. Alas! we know the sorrow of sometimes being captured by it, but still we are not yet slaves. The Spirit, the life of God, in Jesus Christ, hath made us free from the law of sin and death. O, deliver others. Bring them up out of the horrible pit of sin. Deliver them from the death of their natures and save them by the Spirit of the living God, and apply the precious blood of Jesus to their hearts and consciences.

And, Lord, hear us who are Thy children, in whom the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. Hear us while we bring before Thee our daily struggles. Blessed be Thy name, there are some sins which Thou hast helped us to overcome and now they are trodden beneath our feet with many a tear that we ever should have been in bondage to them. And O! there are rebellions within our nature still. We think that we are getting holy and behold we discover that we are under the power of pride, that we are self-conceited about ourselves. Lord help us to master pride.

And then when we try to be humble before Thee, we find ourselves falling into inaction and supineness. Lord, slay sloth within us and never let us find a pillow in the doctrines of grace for ease while yet a single sin remains. Besides, great God, the raging lusts of the flesh will sometimes pounce upon us like wild beasts. Help us to be very watchful lest by any means we be torn and rent by them. O keep us, we beseech Thee, Lord, for without Thy keeping we cannot keep ourselves.

Alas! we are even sometimes subject to unbelief. If trials come which we expected not or if the body grows faint, how liable we are to begin to doubt the faithful promise and so to grieve the Holy Spirit. Lord, we cannot bear this. We cannot bear this. It is not enough for us that our garments are clean and that we walk uprightly before men. We long to walk before Thee in such a way that there will be nothing to grieve Thy Spirit, nothing to vex the tender love of our Beloved. O, come, divine Spirit, and exercise Thy cleansing power upon it according to Thy promise, "I will cleanse Thy blood which I have not cleansed, saith the Lord, that dwelleth in Zion."

O that everything might help us towards purity, for we crave after it. We mind the things of the Spirit and there is groaning within us to be utterly delivered from the things of the flesh, that we may in spirit, soul, and body, be a cleansed temple fit for the indwelling of the Holy One of Israel. Lord help us, we pray Thee, in our daily life, to be as Christ was. If we are men of sorrows, may there be that luster about our sorrow which there was about His in patience and holy submission to the divine law. If we are men of activity, may our activity be like His, for He "went about doing good." May we seek in all ways the good of our fellow-men and the glory of our God. We wish that the zeal of Thine house would eat us up, that we should be full of sacred warmth, that our lips were touched with the live coal so that there be fire in us perpetually flaming and burning, and ourselves a living sacrifice unto God.

Bless us, we pray Thee, as to our example and influence. May it always be of a salutary kind. May there be sweetness and light about us which all must be obliged to

perceive. Not for our honor would we crave this, but that our light may so shine before men that they may "see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven." The Lord grant us this!

We beseech Thee, bless the unconverted among us. Bring them in, dear Savior, bring them in. Help the living among us to compel them to come in that Thy house may be filled. May something of a sacred compulsion be used that they may not be left outside to starve in the highways and hedges, but be brought in to the Gospel feast.

The Lord bless our country at this time. Wilt Thou be gracious unto those who have the helm of affairs that in the midst of great difficulty, they may be wisely and graciously directed. God bless the Sovereign with every mercy and let all that are in authority share the divine favor. Bless other countries, too, for whom we do most earnestly pray, especially for our brethren in Christ across the Atlantic, blessing and praising Thee that we have so many there that are not only of our own kin by nationality, but also kin in Christ. God bless them and those in the Southern seas. The Lord bless the Church of Christ there, nor do Thou fail to remember the struggling ones on the continent of Europe and all the missionaries that are laboring in the foreign field.

O, Savior, let Thy kingdom come. When will this earth be delivered from the incubus of superstition and of infidelity? O that Thou wouldst hear creation's groans and come quickly. O Thou great Deliverer, joy of the earth art Thou, the expected of the tribes of Israel still. Come, we beseech Thee, Thou absent love, Thou dear unknown,

Thou fairest of ten thousand fair. Come a second time to earth and to the sons of men and specially to Thy Bride, the Church. Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus. Amen.