

The Washing of Water By The Word

JEHOVAH, our God, Thou lovest Thy people, Thou hast placed all the saints in the hand of Jesus and Thou hast given Jesus to be to them a leader, a commander, and a husband and we know that Thou delightest to hear us cry on the behalf of Thy Church for Thou carest for Him and Thou art ready to grant to Him according to the covenant provisions which Thou hast laid up in store for Christ Jesus. Therefore, would we begin this prayer by entreating Thee to behold and visit the vine and the vineyard which Thy right hand hath planted. Look upon Zion the city of our solemnities. Look upon those whom Thou hast chosen from before the foundation of the world, whom Christ hath redeemed with blood, whose hearts He has won and holds, and who are His own though they be in the world.

Holy Father, keep Thy people, we beseech Thee, for Jesus' sake Though they are in the world, let them not be of it, but may there be a marked distinction between them and the rest of mankind. Even as their Lord was holy, harmless, and undefiled, and separate from sinners, so may it be with believers in Christ. May they follow Him and may they not know the voice of strangers, but come out from the rest that they may follow Him without the camp.

We cry to Thee for the preservation of Thy Church in the world and especially for her purity. O Father, keep us, we beseech Thee with all keeping, that the evil one touch us not. We shall be tempted, but let him not prevail against us. In a thousand ways, he will lay snares for our feet, but

oh! deliver us as a bird from the snare of the fowler. May the snare be broken that we may escape. Let not Thy Church suffer dishonor at any time, but may her garments be always white. Let not such as come in among her that are not of her utterly despoil her. O Christ, as Thou didst groan concerning Judas, so may Thy children cry to Thee concerning any that have fallen aside into crooked ways, lest the cause of Christ in the earth should be dishonored. O God, cover, we beseech Thee, with Thy feathers all the people of Christ and keep Thy Church even until He shall come Who, having loved His own that were in the world, loveth them even to the end.

We would ask just now that we may be washed as to our feet. We trust Thou hast bathed us once for all in the sin-removing fountain. Thou hast also washed us in the waters of regeneration and given us the renewing of our minds, through Jesus Christ, but O for daily cleansing. Dost Thou see any fault in us? Ah! we know that Thou dost. Wash us that we may be clean. Are we deficient in any virtue? Oh! supply it that we may exhibit a perfect character to the glory of Him who has made us anew in Christ Jesus. Or is there something that would be good if not carried to excess? Be pleased to modify it lest one virtue should slaughter another and we should not be the image of Christ completely.

O Lord and Master, Thou who didst wash Thy disciples' feet of old, still be very patient toward us, very condescending towards our provoking faults, and go on with us, we pray Thee, till Thy great work shall be completed and we shall be brethren of the First Born, like unto Him. Gracious Master, we wish to conquer self in

every respect. We desire to live for the glory of God and the good of our fellow men. We would have it true of us as of our Master, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." Wilt Thou enable us especially to overcome the body with all its affections and lusts. May the flesh be kept under. Let no appetite of any kind of the grosser sort prevail against our manhood, lest we be dishonored and unclean. And let not even the most refined power of the natural mind be permitted to come so forward as to mar the dominion of the Spirit of God within us.

Oh! help us not to be so easily moved even by pain, may we have much patience, and let not the prospect of death ever cause us any fear, but may the Spirit get so much the mastery of the body that we know nothing can hurt the true man. The inner newborn cannot be smitten, nor is it to die. It is holy, incorruptible, and liveth and abideth forever in the life that is in Christ Jesus.

Oh! for a complete conquest of self. Especially render us insensible to praise, lest we be too sensitive to censure. Let us reckon that to have the approbation of God and of our own conscience is quite enough and may we be content, gracious God, to bear the cavillings of unreasonable men. Yea, and to bear the misrepresentations of our own brethren. Those that we love, if they love not us, yet may we love them none the less, and if by mistake they misjudge us, let us have no hard feelings towards them, and God grant we may never misjudge one another. Doth not our Judge stand at the bar? Oh! keep us like little children who do not know, but expect to know hereafter and are content to believe things which they do not understand. Lord, keep us humble,

dependent, yet serenely joyful. May we be calm and quiet even as a weaned child, yet may we be earnest and active.

O Savior, make us like Thyself. We wish not so much to do as to be. If Thou wilt make us to be right, we shall do right. We find how often we have to put a constraint upon ourselves to be right, but oh! that we were like Thee, Jesus, so that we had but to act out ourselves, to act out perfect holiness. We shall never rest till this is the case, till Thou hast made us ourselves to be inwardly holy, and then words and actions must be holy as a matter of course. Now, here we are, Lord, and we belong to Thee. Oh! it is because we are Thine own that we have hope. Thou wilt make us worthy of Thee. Thy possession of us is our hope of perfection. Thou dost wash our feet because we are Thine own. Oh! how sweet is the mercy which first took us to its heart and made us all its own and now continues to deal tenderly with us, that being Christ's own we may have that of Christ within us which all may see proves us to be Christ's own!

Now we would bring before Thee all Thy saints and ask Thee to attend to their trials and troubles. Some we know are afflicted in person, others are afflicted in their dear friends, some are afflicted in their temporal estate and are brought into sore distress. Lord, we do not know the trials of all Thy people, but Thou dost, for Thou are the Head, and the pains of all the members are centered in Thee. Help all Thy people even to the end.

Now we pray Thee to grant us the blessing which we have already sought and let it come upon all the churches

of our beloved country. May the Lord revive true and undefiled religion here and in all the other lands where Christ is known and preached, and let the day come when heathendom shall become converted, when the crescent of Mohammed shall wane into eternal night, and when she that sitteth on the Seven Hills and exalteth herself in the place of God shall be cast down to sink like a millstone in the flood.

Let the blessed Gospel of the eternal God prevail, let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Oh! that we may live to see that day. The Lord bless our country. Have pity upon it. God bless the Sovereign with every mercy and blessing. Grant that there may be in Thine infinite wisdom a change in the state of trade and commerce, that there may be less complaint and distress. Oh! let the people see Thy hand and understand why it is laid upon them, that they may turn from wrongdoing, and seek righteousness and follow after peace. Then shall the blessing return. The Lord hear us as in secret we often cry to Thee on behalf of this misled land. The Lord deliver it and lift up the light of His countenance upon it yet again, for Jesus' sake. Amen.