

PRAYERFUL POSTSCRIPT: HAVE MERCY!

Luke 18:13

“And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.”

Should anyone wish to dedicate his or her life to the Lord Jesus Christ, then please say (either aloud or quietly) the following prayer of commitment – however, do read it over carefully two or three times beforehand in order to gain a clear understanding of its contents. Those who are already believers may wish to use it as a prayer of re-dedication: -

*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, (Mark 1.1)
Please have mercy on me a sinner, (Matthew 15.22; 20.30).
Thank you for dying a terrible death on the cross,
To appease God's fierce anger (Numbers 25.4) against my sin and
Thank you for receiving the punishment I deserved.
Justify me (Isaiah 53.11) and
Cause me to become an adopted child
Of your Heavenly Father, (2 Corinthians 5.21)
Be my Saviour, (Ephesians 5.23)
Be my Lord, (Philippians 3.8)
Be my God (John 20.28) and
Fill me with your Holy Spirit.
Please grant both the strength and the wisdom (James 1.5)
To begin living out
The faith that you have
So generously given (Ephesians 2.8; James 1.17)
As a free gift of your mercy, Amen*

Alternatively, one may wish to use a longer version of the same prayer as set out below. Once again, it will be helpful to read it over beforehand. (If desired, use the shorter version first before moving onto the longer one.)

*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, (Mark 1.1)
Please have mercy on me a sinner and (Matthew 15.22; 20.30)
Grant me your righteousness, (Philippians 3.8-10)
I beg you to forgive all of my sins (Luke 18.9-14)
Of thought, word and deed, (Psalm 103.8-14)*

*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, (Daniel 3.25)
In your power I renounce every sin and
Every work of Satan
I realise that without you
There exists nothing good within me (Romans 13.12)
Which can please or reach out to God, (Isaiah 64.6)
No trace of merit exists
In any of my thoughts or deeds, (Ephesians 2.8-10)*

*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, (Acts 8.37)
In your strength alone, (Zechariah 4.6)
I fully accept you as my Saviour, (1 Timothy 1.15)
Who, out of love, (John 3.16)
Died on the cross at Calvary, (Matthew 27.50)
To completely pacify Divine wrath, (1 John 2.2)*

*Whilst receiving the full punishment for all of
My past, present and future sins, (Hebrews 7.27; 9.26f 10.18)
You did this by offering an unrepeatable blood sacrifice,
And by rising bodily from the dead three days later, (Romans 10.9)*

*In Your strength alone;
I fully accept you as my Lord, (1 Corinthians 12.3)
Having the right
To rule freely over every part of my life.
In Your strength alone;
I fully accept you as my God (John 20.28)
Who is worthy to be praised,
Both in this World and the next, (Revelation 5.12)*

*So now, Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, (Hebrews 4.1f)
Come into my life, (John 1.12)
Enter my filthy heart, (Mark 7.18-23)
Enlighten my unbelieving mind, (Romans 12.2)
Re-direct my selfish will (Luke 12.47)
And fill me with Your Holy Spirit (Luke 11.13)
To deal with any sinful doubts, fears or confusion, (2 Timothy 1,7).
Above all else, help me to know, love and adore
God as my Heavenly Father, Amen, (Deuteronomy 6.5).*

If, for whatever reason, there is little or no faith to make these prayers then do not wallow in self-condemnation but simply cry out to God,

*'Lord, help me in my unbelief,'" (Mark9.24) and
In your mercy please save me from my sin and
Create within me the faith
To firmly believe in Jesus Christ
As my only Lord and Saviour, Amen, (Joel 2.32)*

At this point it is worth re-stating that faith is a free gift from God. It is something created only by his Holy Spirit working inside the human heart and mind. True faith in Christ is not an attribute capable of being '*worked up*' through the aid of human power alone, psychological suggestion or Church growth techniques, (Zechariah 4.6). When Churches resort to such methods they are making the mistake of trying to do God's work of faith for Him; Almighty God is being patronised by those who think that He needs their help. The result is that people either step back from professing Christianity at all or they linger in the Church thinking they really are Christians when in truth they are not! Sometimes, (if they possess the right mixture of charm, ability and opportunity) those in the latter category may even rise to leadership positions within the church and inadvertently cause many problems by propagating a false gospel. Here a vicious cycle develops wherein false leaders propagate a false gospel making false converts. Some of false converts may become leaders who again propagate a false gospel, and so the cycle continues.

All twelve Gospel Teaching Summaries have been written in the knowledge that some readers may well be in that kind of situation – waking up (possibly for the first time) to the fact that, despite all of their Church activities, they have never really been '*born again*' in the first place. There was a man-made and not a God-made conversion. Great encouragement can be drawn from the fact that Jesus graciously dealt with just that type of situation when he encountered the highly '*religious*' Nicodemus, (John 3.1-21). A study of Nicodemus may prove useful. Comfort can be taken from the fact that Jesus is fully capable of saving religious as well as non-religious sinners. His mercy extends to the Pharisee as well as to the Publican!