

# Daily Prayer

THURSDAY, JUNE 11

Today's prayer is based on a passage from Tim Keller's *gospel in life Grace Changes Everything* (capitalization follows the book cover), p. 27, 2010. In this passage Keller quotes historian Richard Lovelace who is referencing Martin Luther on the subject of really living Christian-ly.

*Only a fraction of the present body of professing Christians are solidly appropriating the justifying work of Christ in their lives.*

Heavenly Father, can this be true?  
that most Christians do not understand at a deep level  
what Jesus has done for those who call on your name?  
that if we do understand to some degree we are not *appropriating*  
his work for us very deeply or consistently?  
that *I* may not understand and appropriate Jesus' work for me?

*Many...have a theoretical commitment to this doctrine,*  
God forbid that my knowledge of you would be limited to my head,  
that I would have no deep heart knowledge of you.

*but in their day-to-day existence they rely on their sanctification for justification...*  
Do I do this, Lord?  
Do I feel better about myself because I've been behaving well lately?  
Do I really believe I am justified before you on the basis of my behavior?

*drawing their assurance of acceptance with God from their sincerity,*  
Do I really trust in my own sincerity rather than in you?  
Have I learned nothing from your Word regarding the true state of my heart?  
Forgive me if I have been trusting in my heart's sincerity,  
rather than in your grace to call me despite the state of my heart.

*their past experience of conversion,*  
Do I look back to some religious experience in my past for my assurance?  
When was the last time I felt your close presence?  
Do I constantly try to reconstruct past experiences or  
do I move forward in confident faithfulness of your ongoing  
provision, protection and guidance?

*their recent religious performance or*  
Am I proud of my church attendance? My participation? My giving?  
The number of plates I juggle for my church or community?  
The things I've built or donated?

*the relative infrequency of their conscious, willful disobedience.*  
Lord, I feel as if I *have* to look good to all outward appearances -  
I'm worried about the *unconscious*, habitual self-reliance  
that continues to rear its ugly head.

*Few know enough to start each day with a thoroughgoing stand upon Luther's platform:*  
Lord, I know you used Martin Luther mightily, redirecting history in a huge way.  
What was it in his message that was so powerful and effective?

*you are accepted,*  
That is encouraging.

*looking outward in faith and*  
I am to look away from myself for assurance?  
To trust in something other than myself?

*claiming the wholly alien righteousness of Christ*  
This is exactly right, Lord.  
The goodness, the “right”-ness of Jesus Christ is of an order far beyond me,  
truly *alien*, foreign to anything I can generate.  
But I am accepted as I look to him, believing that his “right”-ness  
is given to me, applied to me, considered to be mine.

*as the only ground for acceptance,*  
This is the only solid basis for my acceptance before you, the holy God.

*relaxing in that quality of trust*  
I get it that continually feeling that *I* have to perform up to your standards  
is actually to put myself under intolerable pressure.  
If that were the requirement I could *never* relax.  
Lord, please give me this quality of trust.

*which will produce increasing satisfaction*  
And help me to see that “trusting in Jesus”  
is not merely the only way to be accepted by you, O God,  
it is also your way of operating in my heart.  
That that *trust*, over time, changes me internally.

*as faith is active in love and*  
Change my heart, O Lord.  
Help me to trust.  
Make that trusting going on in my heart effective in helping me to love,

*gratitude.*  
and fill me with thankfulness for the great gift which you have given to me:  
that my deliverance is from you, of you, by you, in you.  
Grant that I may see this clearly and be changed deeply, internally,  
over time, according to your purpose,  
for Jesus and his kingdom’s sake. Amen.

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We must not think that [God] takes no notice of us, when He does not answer our wishes: for He has a right to distinguish what we actually need.

- John Calvin