

Daily Prayer

SUNDAY, JUNE 14

Today's prayer is based on *The Gospel and the Heart* from Tim Keller's *gospel in life Grace Changes Everything* 2010 (capitalization follows book cover), page 24.

Gracious Father,

Thank you that your gospel - your good news,
is something entirely other than religion or irreligion.

When I am religious I make law and moral obedience
the means of my salvation.

When I am irreligious I make my own laws.

Thank you for the good news that
Jesus took your law so seriously
that he paid the penalty for my disobedience
so that I could be saved by sheer grace.

Thank you for freeing me from the moral law as a system of salvation.

Thank you for your unconditional Fatherly love,
completely separated from my moral performance.

And yet I also thank you for how supremely important your law is -
that it reveals your nature and heart.

Your law teaches me the things you approve and the things you hate.
It teaches me good and evil.

Thank you that Jesus made himself completely obedient to it in my place,
and that he paid the penalty, again in my place.

Never let me take your revealed will lightly.

Help me delight in and love your will.

Thank you that your Word says

*For in my inner being I delight in your law, and
There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus!*

Thank you for making me right with you by faith alone
through the work of Christ alone.

Thank you that, when I am united with Christ by faith,
you see me as "right" as he is.

Help me to change internally to catch up with your gift of "right"-ness.

Help me to think on the high price Jesus paid for me
until I am changed into a generous person
by your good news in my heart.

Father, I have tried and tried to be good according to your law,
but I still doubt my heart.

Deepen my understanding of Jesus' saving work,
of what it means to *live out* the changes
that understanding of his work makes in my heart.

Re-shape my mind, will and emotions.

Lord, I fear that behaving according to your rules
will be superficial and temporary
without real change in my heart.

It is your grace that brings me salvation
and your grace that teaches me to say "No" to ungodliness.
Help me say "No" to ungodliness -
not because I will look bad,
not because good people will exclude me from their company,
not because you will not bless me,
not because I'll hate myself in the morning.
All these things are made of fear and pride,
not gratitude for your grace.
Keep me from using the same self-centered impulses of my heart
to keep me compliant with external rules
without really changing my heart itself.
This is not love for you.
This is me trying to guard my reputation.
Evidently I value self-esteem, prosperity and social approval
more than I value you.
Help me believe your gospel at a level that removes my neediness -
my need to be constantly respected, appreciated and well regarded;
my need to have everything in my life go well;
my need to have power over others.
Please don't let these motives control me.
Overwhelm me with the knowledge of your glory
and that you delight in me with all your being.
May your gospel teach me, train me, discipline me, coach me,
argue with me, deep in my heart,
changing my motivation, views and attitudes,
for Jesus and his kingdom's sake. Amen.

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Prayer doesn't change things - God changes things in answer to prayer.
- John Calvin