

Daily Prayer

FRIDAY, JUNE 26

Today's prayer is based on the thirty-seventh question and answer of the Heidelberg Catechism, 1563.

The first question is:

What do I understand by the word *suffered*? (from the Apostles' Creed)

*That during his whole life on earth, but especially at the end,
Christ sustained in body and soul
the anger of God against the sin of the whole human race.
This he did in order that,
by his suffering as the only atoning sacrifice,
he might set us free, body and soul,
from eternal condemnation,
and gain for us
God's grace,
"right"-ness,
and eternal life.*

Lord Jesus, you who were one with the Father and the Spirit
at the creation of all things,
thank you for leaving the heavenly realm
and entering this unbelieving and ungrateful world
all for the sake of those you named before the foundation of the world.
Thank you for maintaining your message and witness
as, during your career on earth, you moved from being a novelty
to being seen as a menace to the foundational structures of society.
You told us you did not come to bring peace - but a sword.
Thank you for steadfastly holding your own against the rising
opposition and hostility of this world, *your* world.
Thank you for remaining constant through all the indignities
of Judas, Herod, Pilate, the Pharisees - even your own followers.
But more than that - much more than that -
thank you for bearing and enduring the anger of God
against the sin of the whole human race,
and mine in particular.
Thank you for being the only worthy sacrifice -
and be willing to *make* the sacrifice of yourself.
Thank you for setting us completely free -
both our material bodies -
and our immaterial selves -
from any more condemnation at all.
You purchased grace for us, for me;
you freely give me the credit of your perfect record;
and change the quality of my life here and now
into life consistent with life in your presence for eternity;
and all for your kingdom's sake. Amen.

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To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.
- Martin Luther