

# **PULPIT PRAYERS**

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Pulpit Prayers by Alexander Maclaren

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**ALEXANDER MACLAREN**

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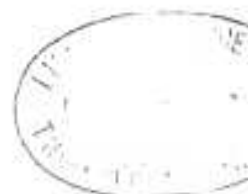


# PULPIT PRAYERS

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## I

O LORD our God, from Whom cometh every good and perfect gift, give us, we pray Thee, the consciousness of Thy presence in this hour of worship, and grant that whatever we may each of us most need for our inward life we may find here and now. Draw our hearts to Thyself, we beseech Thee; prepare us for better service; help each of us to pass beyond the outward forms of worship; and to come, in the silence of our minds, into the secret place of the Most High. Flash Thy truth upon all our hearts and minds, help us in hearing and in speaking, bless us each as we severally require, receive our thanks for the individual and private blessings which we each possess, and for the universal gift which we each may have—the unspeakable gift of God in Jesus Christ. Hear us, we pray Thee, and grant us Thy presence and help now, for our Saviour Christ's sake.

## II

O LORD, we thank Thee that Thou hast, in some measure, drawn back the veil, and shown us the things which are at Thy right hand. And we beseech Thee to help each of us, so long as we tarry here below, that we may press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. May we forget the things that are behind, our failures, our

disappointments, our attainments, or only remember them to make us more earnest in seeking that tomorrow may not be as this day, but much more conformed to Thy holy will. Help all of us, we pray Thee, to live as those whose home is beyond the stars, and in the depths of God. And may this our life here below be so used by us as that it shall fit us to be 'partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.'

We beseech Thee for this in regard of all of us gathered here this evening, and especially we pray for the younger members of this congregation that they may be kept innocent of much transgression, that they may begin aright, and so be delivered from many a pang and many a sorrow, many a disenchantment, and many a stain. O Lord, we beseech Thee to be near them, especially any amongst them who may be living solitary lives, and exposed to the temptations of this great city. We beseech Thee that these young men may abhor youthful lusts, which war against the soul. We pray that they may be armed against the suggestions of evil that lie on every side, that they may be kept from the corrupting influences of companionship that may be necessary for them, that they may be wise to understand the snares, the bait, and the hook. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst bless them all in their several courses, granting to them such prosperity in this world's matters as Thou seest is best for them, and helping them to keep their hearts above the world, and with all their getting to seek most to get the durable riches and righteousness which are more precious than rubies, and none of the things that they desire are to be compared to it.

O Lord! bless us in our meeting now. We beseech

Thee to give us some word to speak; though our own words be feeble let Thy strength come with them. Do Thou help us, and give us wisdom and utterance and earnestness, and may the word of the Lord be magnified among us, and the message of the great love of the Christ Who keeps us from evil find entrance into many hearts. O Lord, bless us each in our several callings and condition; be near any of us who may have any special temptations or difficulties. If any of us are proving the loneliness of life, or its sadness, or its difficulties, and if our way may seem to be barred against us, do Thou help us to patience and courage, to wise effort, to dependence upon Thee. O Lord, do Thou keep us all, and may every one of us from this time forth say unto Thee, 'My Father! Thou art my Guide.' These young men and maidens we commend to Thee that they may grow up serving God, His faithful witnesses and soldiers, hating covetousness and all evil, and binding sound wisdom and discretion on their hearts and their foreheads.

And now, Lord, we would pray for others than ourselves. We would remember the many thousands who, at this time, are gathered together in different churches, in different lands, and with different tongues, to praise Thee and seek Thy face. And we beseech Thee that upon all Thy children Thy love may come down like the dove, and abide with them for ever.

Hear us now, when we cry to Thee, for all that are in any kind of sorrow or trouble, and humbly ask Thee that where Thou art chastening there may be the sense of the Father's love, even in the chastisement, and that Thy rod as well as Thy staff may comfort many a troubled heart.



Take us, O Lord, we pray Thee now, into Thy gracious care, and what we have failed to ask, or have asked amiss, do Thou give in large abundance, not for our sakes but for Christ's sake, and for Thy own Name and love's sake.

## III

Set us free, O Lord, we beseech Thee, from the fetters of sin and earth, that we may indeed joyfully serve Thee, and labour on at Thy command. We would say, 'O Lord! truly I am Thy servant; Thou hast loosed my bonds.' Thou dost set us free that in Thy service we may find liberty. Thou dost honour us by letting us do Thy will. Thou dost incline our hearts, when we wait before Thee, to the joy of obedience and the blessedness of action for Thee. Thou dost draw us by mighty motives, Thou dost inspire us with power not our own. Grant, O Lord, that we, enriched by so many gifts of Thine hand, and enabled by so many inspirations of Thy grace, may indeed joyously wait upon God, in all holy obedience; and as the eyes of a servant are towards his master, so may ours be to Thee, O our God.

We bless Thee that Thou hast gathered us together this morning, and that so many mercies have crowned our path since last we met together. Another week of blessing from Thy hand has gone over our heads. We are another week nearer the time of rest. We beseech Thee that we may be conscious of some growth in Thy grace and knowledge, and that we may be aware of some weakening in us of anything that is contrary to Thy will, and may gather together here better prepared and more desirous to receive Thy great gifts of grace and goodness.

We thank Thee, Lord, for all Thy blessings to us. We praise Thee for daily care and nightly mercies. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to offer up to Thee not only the words of thanksgiving but the sacrifice of loving, trustful, and obedient hearts, and that our characters may become more like what Thou wouldst have us to be. We have to pray for the forgiveness of many imperfections and sins. We could not lose the consciousness of our own shortcomings. We pray Thee to deliver us from all illusions as to our own strength and our own righteousness. We pray Thee for quickened consciences, enlightened by Thee; and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst preserve us from ever losing sight of our own deep necessities, or from ever seeing them so mountainous and great as that they obscure Thy greater mercy and Thy more than sufficient supplies. May we ever hold in one grasp our own need and Thy infinite riches, our own sinfulness and Thy free blessing, our own deficiencies and Thy wealth.

We pray that Thou wouldst use our many necessities and wants as open doors through which Thy grace may come into our hearts. We pray that we may keep open the door for the entrance of all Thy gifts. Draw near to us now, and help us always to wait on the Lord so that we shall not want any good. Thine ears are open to the cry of the righteous; make us righteous that our cry may 'enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.' Teach us how and what to desire. Help us to subordinate all our wishes for earthly things to the higher aspirations after greater and deeper good. May our lives be in accordance with that prayer; and may we, in all our daily pursuits and amidst all the temptations and

distractions that belong to our earthly life, be seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Lord, we feel that our lives would be very different if that prayer were fulfilled, and we know that it is in Thy heart to fulfil it unless we hinder Thee. So we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst mould us, and discipline us so that we may cease to set our affections and minds on things of earth shutting out the things that are above where Christ is. We may not know what we ask, we do not know how Thou mayest be pleased to fulfil the petition; but we ask Thee to help us that we may stand to it, and even if Thou dost answer it by disappointment and by sorrow may believe that they too are working together for our good. Hear us; in Thy mercy forgive, quicken, strengthen and answer us, through Christ Jesus our Lord.

## IV

O LORD, Who dwellest in the light, and hast immortal life, we, out of the darkness and ringed about with death, do lift up our hearts to Thee, and beseech Thee that some beams of the light, and some touches of the life, may be ours. May they grow in us, may we see light more clearly in Thy light day by day, and drink ever deeper draughts from the fountain of life, and the river of Thy pleasures.

We draw near to Thee now, compassed about with many infirmities, and some of us carrying in our hearts some sorrows, and all of us conscious of much weakness which often foils our efforts; and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us not only to trust in the living God, Who giveth us all things richly to enjoy, but to flee all the things that are contrary to His will,