

A.W. Tozer - “Sometimes I go to God and say, ‘God, if you never answer another prayer while I live on this earth, I will still worship you as long as I live and in the ages to come for what you have already done in my life.’ You see, I’m already so far in debt to God, that if I were to live one million millenniums I couldn’t pay Him for what He’s done for me.”

O Lord God, as we come to the close of another year, it is a time when we often look back and reflect on the good, the bad, the joyful, the painful, that has happened to us over the past 12 months. We look back and think about the ways we were, and the ways we weren’t, the people you want us to be, or even the people we want ourselves to be. We had times when our thoughts, our attitudes, our actions brought others and ourselves, and hopefully you, joy and pleasure, and we felt good about ourselves. There were other times when we were less than our best, and we are humbled and contrite. And yet, Lord, we know that you have always been there for us. Ready to forgive, to strengthen, to comfort, to guide, if we only would come to you and listen to you. You have indeed given us so much already, and done so much for us already. You have given us life and this beautiful creation we live in. You have gifted us with skills and abilities, family and friends. You have answered our prayers – sometimes the way we want, other times the way you knew was best. You have showered us with blessings along the way that have proven your love and presence in our lives. And in this Christmas season, we know that you gave us the ultimate gift when you gave us “you.” And we could never repay you for any of that. And the good news is – you don’t want us to. You don’t ask us to even the score, or to settle accounts. You only ask us to love you and love others, and to live in a way that expresses that love. And so, as we look ahead to 2018, may we live in such a way that shows that love – to all. May we be grateful for all that you have done for us. May we never take you, or our lives or our loved ones, for granted. And may you help us to grow even stronger in our knowledge, our commitment, our service to you and your kingdom here on earth.

Lord, we come also to pray for others – those we love and those who are heavy on our hearts. There is a lot of pain in this world, and at this time of year, the pain can feel greater and more hopeless. And so we lift up those that are in particular need. You have heard those on our prayer list, but there are others.

As the psalmist says, “Let the words of our mouth and the meditations of our heart, be acceptable to you O Lord, our rock and our redeemer.” In the name of the one whose birth we celebrate, Jesus Christ our Lord, as we stand and sing together the prayer he taught us,

Lord’s Prayer