

# Something to Pray About

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October 2014 – Cindy Sears

*Now that we have been put right with God through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

—Romans 5:1 GNT

## You Are Righteous

Have you ever started to pray to God for something, and then began thinking that you do not deserve to receive anything good from God? I catch myself doing this often—thinking that I am not “good enough” to receive good things; that I am unworthy of the blessings I already have, so how can I possibly have the gall to request even more blessings?

Yet, a true believer in Christ has no need of shame, no reason to feel guilty. In Christ you deserve mercy from God, and you are worthy enough to receive blessings from God.

“But now God’s way of putting people right with himself has been revealed. It has nothing to do with law...God puts people right through their faith in Jesus Christ. God does this to all who believe in Christ...by the free gift of God’s grace all are put right with him through Christ Jesus, who sets them free.” --Romans 3:21-24 (selected portions) (GNT)

When God looks at a Christian disciple He sees His Son, Jesus Christ. Therefore, there is no need to work to be deserving of God’s grace, His mercy, or His provisioning. As a Christian, you do not need to earn your way into heaven. God has given you that reward as a gift through His Son, Jesus Christ. Heaven, or living with God the Creator, is the natural home of Jesus Christ. As His followers, heaven, or living in the presence of God the Creator, is our natural home now, too.

Yet, a true believer in Christ has no need of shame, no reason to feel guilty. In Christ you deserve mercy from God, and you are worthy enough to receive blessings from God.

Also, you do not have to earn God’s pleasure or His blessings. If you have a need, ask that it be filled. You do not have to feel deserving of God’s mercy, grace, or His provisioning. The only consideration in what you ask for is whether or not it is within the circle of God’s will for you, His church, and His kingdom’s work. (Just don’t forget that God puts a high priority on “community” and “covenant” when you are asking and looking for a “yes” answer to your requests. It isn’t all about you or your idea of happiness.)

God knows that you need food, shelter, clothing, and companionship and love, and even beautiful and pleasurable things in your life—ask Him for these things. He knows that you have needs for specific items to help you serve Him better, and to help you be more joyful and better able to witness for Him. Ask, seek, knock and wait for the door to open; the gift to appear.

And do not box God in. Do not box yourself into a preconceived idea of what you need to be God’s witness and representative in the world. “God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform.”\* Do not box yourself into a preconceived idea of what you need to be happy either. God knows you better than you can ever know yourself. Let Him work on you in His way and in His own time. He will sanctify you (make you a new creature in Christ Jesus)—IF you let Him!

So, when you pray, go ahead and tell God what you think you need or want. He will let you know what you truly need and what you ought to truly desire. But never let feelings of unworthiness or guilt or shame stop you from asking or from talking with God. He knows your name. He cared enough to send His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for you. He watches over you. He desires to hear from you. In Christ, you deserve to be loved by God and to be cared for by God.

And what can separate us from God's love once we are in Christ?

“...nothing can separate us from his love: neither death nor life, neither angels nor other heavenly rulers or powers, neither the present nor the future, neither the world above nor the world below—there is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord.” –Romans 8:38b (GNT)

Not even our sins—of commission or omission—can separate us from God's love and care, because we are credited with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Peace and joy are ours when we remember this.

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, rejoice!” --Philippians 4:4 (RSV)

So, go ahead and ask! And expect to be blessed again and again!

\*From hymn by William Cowper, written in 1773.

