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A Prayer Regarding Racism in the United States

Scripture Reading:

Psalms 34:1-22; Deuteronomy 10:17

Reflections of the Heart:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." United States Declaration of Independence.

Scriptural Prayer:

Magnificent Father, Creator of heaven and earth and everything therein, we praise You, and love You. Lord, we thank You for allowing us to live in the United States of America, a nation where we can freely worship You. We thank You that we are also free to lift our voices in protest as we deal with systemic racism, injustice and police oppression. We are thankful that people from all races and walks of life are now uniting and making their voices heard for the cause of justice and righteousness. We are mindful of Your Holy Scripture, which confirms that righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne. Unfailing love and truth walk before you as attendants. We thank You for Your Son, Jesus Christ, who walked the earth and gave us an example of how to treat one another as He ministered to disadvantaged people and met their needs. Thank You for the Holy Spirit, who reminds us of Jesus' love for all people, which He so miraculously shared by giving His life as a sacrifice on our behalf. And

whatever we do or say, we proclaim that we do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to You, Father God.

Heavenly Father, You created human beings in Your own image, male and female. And, Lord Jesus, You instructed that the most important commandment is that we love the Lord, our God with all our hearts, souls, minds and strength. A second commandment is equally important: that we love our neighbors as we love ourselves. Despite Your commands, a segment of the U.S. population has vigorously held onto positions of power and privilege through systemic racism. The historically majority White population in America has created and selectively enforced laws to oppress Black people and other people of color. Our government and judicial systems have also routinely supported the use of excessive force by police, especially against Black people, in “protecting” the privileged. The current gap in policing practices is so wide that while members of the White population feel comfort and security when they see police, Black citizens often experience fear and dread. Holy Father, You created people to be virtuous, but many have turned to follow their own downward path. Many people in this country discriminate against people simply because of the color of their skin. Lord, Your Word confirms that the human heart is the most deceitful of all things and that You search all hearts and examine secret motives. You give all people their due rewards, according to what their actions deserve. Lord, we pray that You change the hearts of people in America who discriminate against others on the basis of race and socioeconomic status. Even people who profess Jesus as their Lord and Savior have supported racism in America - sometimes openly, and often through their silence - “minding their own business,” as systemic injustice protected their power and privilege. Lord, Your Word is clear, and we stand on Your Word as we pull down the strongholds in the hearts and minds of government officials, law enforcement and citizens who believe they are entitled to reign over segments of people in Your creation. Father, Your Word says there is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For we all are one in Christ Jesus. So, we pull down the demonic strongholds in the minds of those who consider themselves privileged and entitled, and we declare that all members of the Body of Christ will love their neighbors as they love themselves. Protect Black Lives Matter protestors who are risking their health during the pandemic for the cause of justice and righteousness for Black people and all who are oppressed. Father, we pray that You will spur the Body of Christ to lead in demonstrating Your love, as our nation works to identify and replace racism and oppression with Your justice and righteousness.

Holy Spirit, bring to my remembrance instances in which I have been guilty of discrimination, and counsel me to change my heart and apologize to those I have offended:

Lord Jesus, as You did with Paul on the road to Damascus, we pray that You will cause our national and local governmental, business and pastoral leaders to turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. Your Word says that then they will receive forgiveness for their sins and be given a place among God's people, who are set apart by faith. Father, we understand that if we refuse to forgive others, You will not forgive our sins. So, Lord, we pray that You will help Black and White citizens to forgive one another for past and current sins. Holy Father, forgive our nation for showing partiality in the administration of our laws. Forgive our citizens for taking our constitutional freedoms for granted. Forgive our governmental leaders for abusing and misusing the laws of this land to suit their own personal interests, agendas and needs. Forgive our leaders and citizen for embracing partisan politics above Your Holy Word. Forgive us, as a nation, for not always acknowledging You and Your righteousness. Forgive us for not respecting those whom You have placed in authority to lead our nation. Forgive our nation's leaders for their sins. Forgive those who do not consult with You about governing our country. Forgive the Body of Christ for treating Your Word as if parts of it are optional, that we can pick and choose which scriptures apply to us. Lord, forgive me for ***(list any sins that you have committed)***. Holy Spirit, remind us all of those we need to forgive and help us to be quick to forgive. As for me, Holy Spirit, bring to my remembrance those I need to forgive. ***(Take a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal names or faces of people that you may need to forgive. As He reveals them, say "I forgive name of person(s)." Now, trust the Lord to heal any wounds in your soul caused by unforgiveness.)***

Holy Spirit, help us all not to yield to temptation but deliver us from the evil one.

How great are You, O Lord! Your power is absolute! Your understanding is beyond comprehension! You are mighty, but You do not despise anyone! You are mighty in both power and understanding. Wealth and honor come from You alone, for You rule over everything. Power and might are in Your hand, and at Your discretion, people are

made great and given strength. In the mighty and wonderful Name of Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray. Amen.

Scripture References for the Written Text: Psalms 34:1-22; Deuteronomy 10:17; Psalms 89:14; Colossians 3:17; Genesis 1:27; *Matthew 22:36-40; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Jeremiah 17:10; Galatians 3:28; Colossians 1:13; Proverbs 3:6-7; Acts 26:18; Romans 13:1-2; Psalms 147:5; Job 36:5; I Chronicles 29:12*

Today, I will trust God to:

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