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## Documents Online

**Title:** Prayer Written by Charles Nisbet

**Date:** April 18, 1759

**Location:** I-McIntoshM-1965-4

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Edinburgh 18<sup>th</sup> April 1759

O my God! if such a sinful and polluted creature may address thee so; several years have now passed over our heads, since, by thy good hand upon us we dedicated ourselves to thee, to whom we do of right belong and made thee a sacrifice of right hands and right eyes; thou knowest the sincerity of our heart when we did so, and at the same time (what we were not sensible of) our weakness and inability to keep the same and that we would deal treacherously in the covenant of our God: Thou knowest the weakness and perversity of our nature,averse to all good and prone to all evil and what a world of iniquity (unknown to ourselves) we constantly bear about us. Alas O God! we have grieved thy holy spirit of promise; we have provoked him to depart from us and to abandon us to all the wicked desires of our own heart, we have, sinned; What shall we say unto thee O thou observer of men? Thou compassest us behind and before, and layest thine hand upon us, thou art ever intimately present with us and art conscious of all our thoughts and motions; there is not a word in our tongue but before we speak, O Lord thou knowest it altogether; not that standing of which thy awful presence we have forgotten thee, we have separated thee from our every thought, and endeavoured to abuse our mind into a sort of belief (contrary to thy word and the light of our conscience) that either thou wast altogether such an one as ourself and wouldst approve our sin; that thou couldst not judge us through the dark cloud, or that thou wast such a being as thou wast no where revealed thyself to be, whose laws we might insult with impunity, and yet afterwards obtain thy pardon, but thou art wise in heart and mighty in strength; who hath hardened himself against thee and prospered? Thouallest up the meek and castest the wicked to the ground; whereby there is no wisdom, nor counsel, nor providence against the Lord, we may vainly imagine that we will violate thy laws with impunity and then take refuge in thy great mercies; but the Lord taketh the worldly wise in their own craftings. We acknowledge thy dominion and just authority over us, that thou canst easily confound all designs formed without consulting thee. Verily there is no darkness nor hiding place where the workers of iniquity can conceal themselves or their purposes from thine eyes. Thou knowest the thoughts of men to be vanity. Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest and makest to learn thy precepts. May we henceforth undertake nothing without imploring thy blessing and protection, on us and our designs: Without thee we can do nothing but what it were infinitely better for us never to have done! may we ever behave with that decent sense of subjection and subordination to thine authority which becomes the workers of thine hands, and the sheep of thy pasture; may we never adventure to choose for ourselves, while we have infinite wisdom to choose for us may we trust in the Lord, and not lean to our own understanding; prosper and direct our purposes and designs formed for thy glory and the general good: strengthen us in every good word and work; preserve us from our own deceitful and wicked hearts, and may thy Spirit O Lord which is good, guide us into all truth. Dispel the thick cloud which vice has cast over our intellectual faculties: abandon us not to that heedlessness and unmindfulness of God, in which alas! we have too long indulged ourselves and delighted. May we hallow thy word in our heart, that we may never sin against thee: May thy most holy precepts ever be the subject of our delightful meditation and may we take pleasure to discourse of thy doings; open our eyes O Lord, and give us to see the wonders that are in thy law: teach us the perfect way of thy precepts, and incline our hearts to observe it perfectly to the end: Lord, thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts carefully

O that thou wouldst likewise direct our ways, so that we may observe thy statutes! 'tis by thee alone that the just man's footsteps are ordered aright, and that he greatly delighteth in thy way. Lord direct and strengthen us by thy Spirit to do those things that are pleasing in thy sight. Our sins have been great and numerous, aggravated by many circumstances that increase their guilt, and sin ill desert: Lord avert the punishment we have justly deserved for them and apply the infinite merits of Jesus Christ to our souls that iniquity may not be our final ruin. O Lord we are weak and feeble; undertake for us: Be surety to us for good, for in us there is no help nor strength at all, our strongest resolutions cannot stand the slightest attacks of temptation, and all our strength is weakness on an assault. Grant that tho we are weak in ourselves we may be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might: may we lift our eyes to the everlasting hills, from whence cometh our aid: may our help be in the name of the Lord, who hath made Heaven and earth. Lord, may we be constant, diligent and assiduous in our applications to thee for that help which we so much need. May the humility and reverence of our addresses be in some measure proportioned to thy infinite greatness; and our own meanness, may our fervency be answerable to the danger and need we are in and may the frequency of them be in a degree conform<sup>able</sup> to the multitude of our wants. Conduct us O God, by thy Grace and Spirit through all the threatenings and more dangerous allurements of a present world unto that everlasting peace which shall be the portion of all them that wait on thee. We are indeed most unworthy of this everlasting Bless, and most unfit for it; Lord, accept of us for the worthiness of Jesus Christ, who fulfilled the law, and suffered its punishment for the sake of sinners like us. O justify, wash and sanctify us by thy powerful Spirit and by the blood of Christ, that cleanse us from all iniquity. Deliver us from the power as well as the guilt of them, grant that we may live no longer after the flesh, lest we die, but enable us by thy Spirit to mortify these deeds of the body, that we may live unto thee, that we may live forever. Lord forsake not the work of thine own hands: leave us not in the hand of our enemies, may we walk all day in the light of thy Countenance; may thy song be with us by night, and our prayer unto the God of our life. Lord give us ever so much of the light of thy Countenance, as may support us amidst all the trials or pleasures of this world, May nothing ever be able to pervert us from our firm allegiance to thee: May goodness, and mercy follow us all our life, and may our eternal dwelling place be in thy house above. We bless thee, O our God, for the bounty of thy Providence, the riches of thy grace, and the means of salvation. We thank thee for our Creation, our preservation and protection hitherto, for thy good hand upon us at present, and the hopes thou givest us to entertain for the future. We thank thee that thou hast not cut us off in the midst of our sins, nor sealed us up under judicial hardness and final impenitency. We bless thee for thy Spirit which hath hitherto strove with us, and endured our manners, Lord may it never cease to do so; nor suffer us to be at ease in any thing but thee; We bless thee for the light of reason and understanding of conscience and education. May we never sin against nor disgrace thy light. We thank thee for thy holy Scriptures the words of everlasting life, but above all, adore and bless thee for Jesus Christ thy son, on whom all our hopes of sanctification and salvation are founded; may he be made of God into us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. We dedicated ourselves wholly,

Soul ~~and~~ body and Spirit, all that we have or are to thee our God, and  
to thy service: We are thine O God, therefore our lips shall shew forth thy  
praise. accept of our offering for christ's sake, and make us fit for thy  
service. may we never forsake thy precepts, and for this purpose may  
thy grace and Spirit never forsake us, but strengthened by it, may we  
fulfil all thy good pleasure and at last enter into thine inheritance  
all that we ask is for the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ thy son  
our saviour, for whom we bless thee, and to whom with the father and  
holy Spirit, be all praise and honour: ~~as ever was and is, Amen~~

Edinburgh 18<sup>th</sup> April 1759-

O my God! If such a sinful and polluted creature may address thee so; several years have now passed over our head, since, by thy good hand upon us we dedicated ourselves to thee, to whom we do of right belong and made thee a sacrifice of right hands and right eyes; thou knowest the sincerity of our heart when we did so, and at the same time (what we were not sensible of) our weakness and inability to keep the same and that we would deal treacherously in the covenant of our God. Thou knowest the weakness and perversity of our nature, averse to all good and prone to all evil and what a world of iniquity (unknown to ourselves) we constantly bear about us. Alas O God! We have grieved thy holy spirit of promise; we have provoked him to depart from us and to abandon us to all the wickedness of our own heart; we have sinned, what shall we say unto thee O thou observer of men? Thou compasses us behind and before, and layest thine hand upon us, thou art ever intimately present with us and art conscious of all our thought and motions, there is not a word in our tongue but before we speak, O Lord thou knowest it altogether, notwithstanding of which thy awful presence we have forgotten thee, we have separated thee from our very thought, and endeavoured to abuse our mind into a sort of belief (contrary to thy record and the light of our conscience) that either thou wast altogether such an one as ourself and wouldst approve our sin. Being as thou hast nowhere revealed thyself to be, whose laws we might insult with impunity and yet afterwards obtain thy pardon, but thou art wise in heart and mighty in strength. Who hath hardened himself against thee and prospered? Thou liftest up the meek and castes the wicked to the ground. Verily there is no wisdom nor counsel, nor prudence against the Lord, we may vainly imagine that we will violate thy laws with impunity and then take refuge in thy great mercies; but the Lord taketh the worldly wise in their own craftiness. We acknowledge thy dominion and just authority over us, that thou canst easily confound all designs formed without consulting thee. Verily there is no darkness nor hiding place where the workers of iniquity can conceal themselves or their purposes from thine eyes. Thou knowest the thoughts of men to be vanity. Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest and makest to learn thy precepts. May we henceforth undertake nothing without imploring thy blessing and protection on us and our designs. Without thee we can do nothing but what it were infinitely better for us never to have done! May we ever behave with that decent sense of subjection and subordination to thine authority which becomes the works of thine hands, and the sheep of thy pasture; may we never adventure to chuse for ourselves, while we have infinite wisdom to choose for us. Direct our purposes and designs formed for thy glory and the general good. Sthrengthen us in every good word and work; preserve us from our own deceitful and wicked hearts, and may thy spirit, O Lord which is good, guide us into all truth. Dispel the thick cloud which vice has cast over our Intellectual faculties; abandon us not to that heedlessness and unmindfulness of God, in which alas! we have too long indulged ourselves and delighted. May we hide thy word in our heart, that we may never sin against thee. May thy most holy precepts ever be the subject of our delightful meditation and may we take pleasure to discourse of thy doings; open our eyes O Lord, and give us to see the wonders that are in thy law. Teach us the perfect way of thy precepts, and incline our hearts to observe it perfectly to the end. Lord, thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts carefully,

O that thou wouldest likewise direct our ways so that we may observe thy statutes! 'Tis by thee alone that just man's footsteps are ordered aright and that he greatly delighteth in thy way. Lord direct and strengthen us by thy spirit to do those things that are pleasing to thy sight. Our sins have been great and enormous, aggravated by many circumstances that increase their guilt and our ill desert. Lord avert the punishment we have justly deserved for them and apply the infinite merits of Jesus Christ to our souls that iniquity may not be our final ruin, O Lord we are weak and feeble; undertake for us. Be surety to us for good, for us tho there is no help nor strength at all, our strongest resolutions cannot stand the slightest attack of temptation and all our strength is on an assault. Grant that tho we are weak in ourselves we may be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. May we lift our eyes to the everlasting Hills, from whence cometh our aid. May our help be in the name of the Lord, who hath made Heaven and earth. Lord may we be constant, diligent and assiduous in our appreciations to thee for that help which we so much need. May the humility and reverence of our addresses be in some measure proportioned to thy infinite greatness; and our own weakness, may our fervency be answerable to the danger and need we are in and may the frequency of them be in a degree conformable to the multitude of our wants. Conduct us O God by thy Grace and spirit through all the threatenings and more dangerous allurements of a present world into that everlasting peace which shall be the portion of all them that wait on thee. We are indeed most unworthy of this everlasting bliss, and most unfit for it, Lord accept of us for the worthiness of Jesus Christ, who fulfilled the law, and suffered its punishment for the sake of sinners like us, O justify, wash and sanctify us by thy powerful spirit and by the blood of Christ that cleanseth from all iniquity. Deliver us from the power as well as the guilt of them grant that we may live no longer after the flesh, lest we die but enable us by thy spirit to mortify thee. Deeds of the body, that we may live unto thee, that we may live forever. Lord forsake not the work of thine own hands. Leave us not in the hand of our enemies, may we walk all day in the light of thy countenance; may thy song be with us by night, and out prayer unto the God of our life. Lord, give us ever so much of the light of thy countenance as may support us amidst all the trials or pleasures of this world, may nothing ever be able to prevent us from our firm allegiance to thee. May goodness, and mercy follow us all our life, and may our eternal dwelling place be in thy house above. We bless thee, O our God, for the bounty of thy Providence, the riches of thy grace, and the means of salvation. we thank thee for our creation, our preservation and protection hitherto, for thy good hand upon us at present, and the hopes thou givest us to entertain for the future. We thank thee that thou hast not cut us off in the midst of our sins, nor sealed us up under judicial hardness and final impenitency. We bless thee for thy spirit which hath hitherto strove with us, and indured our manners; Lord may it never cease to do so; nor suffer us to be at ease in any thing but thee; we bless thee for the light of reason and understanding of conscience and education. May we never sin against nor disgrace their light. We thank thee for thy holy scriptures the words of everlasting life, but above all adore and bless thee for Jesus Christ thy son, on whom all our hopes of sanctification and salvation are founded, may he be made of God into us, wisdom righteousness, sanctification and redemption. We dedicated ourselves wholly;

soul body and spirit, all that we have or are to thee our God, and to thy service. We are thine O God, therefore our lips shall show forth thy praise. Accept our offering for Christ's sake, and make us fit for thy service. May we never forsake thy precepts; and for this purpose may thy grace and spirit never forsake us, but strengthened by it, may we fulfill all thy good pleasure and at last enter into thine inheritance all that we ask is for the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ thy son our saviour, for whom wwe bless the, and to whom with the father and holy spirit, be all praise and hounour, ascribed now and ever. Amen