

My Prayer - Renewal

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Loving and forgiving are you great God. As our Father you want what is best for us. But, you have given us free will to decide what we think is best for ourselves. We fail to use this freedom to glorify you in all that we do, and our choices are oftentimes selfish, rooted in fear, and lead us and others astray.

Father, you are a cleansing spring rain that rinses the pollen and dust, and removes the remaining leaves and branches from the previous season. Your rain, at times, comes as a violent storm, yet at other times a gentle mist. We are like the trees emerging from the soil. You look after us. You dress us splendidly with elaborate coverings marked uniquely in size, shape and texture. Each leaf is a universe unto itself. It's veins, it's color, it's shape, it's perfect edges, and even still, it's frayed, discolored and shriveled edges. Majestic we stand, proudly striving for the heavens...the impossible. We fail to reach them despite our best efforts. Even in the most perfect conditions of rain and shine we fall short, yet there is no mistaking your pride in us and our attempts. You encourage our roots to grow deep so that our trunk and branches can extend to the farthest reaches. Just as with the trees, we, too, go through seasons. We are stripped bare and exposed by our wrong intentions and poor decisions, leaving us naked and cold. But, just as the sun rises, so, too, do the seasons come back around. Emerging from our "winter" and from the warmth of spring there comes new life, new perspective, renewed hope...*growth!* We yearn for the time of spring, but we desire it all the time. We don't want to experience our own personal "fall", or expose our nakedness resulting from our poor choices, but our humanity makes this as impossible as escaping the coming seasons. You encourage us to embrace ourselves, not just in the spring and summer, but also in our fall and winter. We wait painfully to spring new life, but one comes before the other. You encourage us to confess our sins, and Jesus told of His body, and His blood saying, "take, eat, drink this is my body and blood given to you for the forgiveness of sins."

Lord God we need your cleansing spring rain. Forgive us when we fall short, or when we fail to glorify you in our choices. Forgive us when we pursue less than holy things...when we ignore the leanings of your Holy Spirit. We confess to you by the blood of Christ that we are broken and self-serving. We ignore our true selves, the people you made us to be in order to satisfy the world. We even do good things to mask our selfish and broken motives. These good things are a façade, but we (and you) know the truth. We lack the self-awareness that keeps our roots from growing deep and our branches from spreading wide and tall. Lead us in ways that reveal our true self to you. Give us the strength to be honest with ourselves. Reward us with self-acceptance, forgiveness and an increased desire to grow close to you, just as the trees endure and grow through the seasons. In your Holy name I pray! -Amen

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