

The City Church, New York

The Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession – Sunday August 27, 2006

It was out of much suffering that George Matheson, the blind Scottish preacher, wrote the hymn, "O Love, That Wilt Not Let Me Go." He spent his last full day in this world – on holiday – exactly 100 years ago today. Then he was called Home to the Father's House where, with the clearest vision, he saw his Savior face to Face.

Let us pray.

O Love, that will not let us go: Let us not let go of You. Open our eyes to faith that we might see through all the darkness of this world that we, too, are loved with the everlasting love of our Creator and Redeemer. Open our ears to faith, that we might listen very closely for the words of comfort and conviction that You would have us hear this morning. May no one leave this place today with any doubt that he or she is dearly loved by the One who gave His all that we might be forgiven all our sin and be brought alive from the death into which we'd plunged ourselves. May nobody go away from this place this morning without having her hunger for You, fed, without having his thirst for You, quenched. May we move forward with a refreshingly rekindled taste for Your amazing grace and peace, a continuing hunger and thirsting after Your righteousness, that we, too, might one day be welcomed Home and see our Savior, face to Face.

On this day of remembrance of our brother George, we're grateful that Your blessings on him endure. We thank You for Your Presence to him who sat in the darkness of his parsonages at Innellan and Edinburgh, recalling the sacred texts he'd memorized in order to proclaim the Light of the world. We thank You that, out of his personal suffering, far too painful for him even to explain, he brought forth the hymn we hear again today. Encourage us with the promise for which he praised you. May we praise You, too.

We offer up our petitions – not that You are unaware of our needs – but that we, bowing before You, might remind ourselves at prayer that You do hear and answer according to Your precious wisdom and perfect will. So we thank You for Your response to us. Give us a corresponding wisdom and will to receive all that You have for us.

We pray our morning prayers in the name of Jesus Christ, the world's only Savior, the world's only Lord. And we add these words that he taught us to pray to You, saying:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.