

## **TILL CHRIST IS FORMED IN YOU**

*"My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you..." Galatians 4:19*

### **REFLECTION**

The apostle Paul pleaded that the Galatian Christians would allow Christ to be formed in them. He reasoned with them to renounce superficial religiosity and rituals in favour of a rich relationship with God that leads to a reshaping of the heart and mind to be like Christ. Paul was concerned for them as they were being led astray by false teachers who advocated a return to the Jewish ordinances and practice in order to win God's favour and to impress man (Gal 4:12).

We often make the mistake of taking pride and security in our Christian activities, e.g. church attendance, bible study, serving, tithing, missions, etc. These things are not wrong in themselves, but they are not the ways and means for us earn our salvation, win favour or blessing from God. We often put emphasis in the outward form of faith and neglect the more crucial matter of inner formation where God shapes our heart, character, motivations and values. It is from within us, where Christ is being formed, that every outward expressions and activities flow from.

In our fallen human nature we tend towards the desire to win the praise and favour of man. The root of the matter is human pride and God wants to dethrone our pride with His Spirit and humility. Our heart is what God wants to reshape and restore. Christ being formed in us turns us away from every acts of superficial religiosity and rituals. Instead, it turns us towards acts of faith that flows from a heart of gratitude and love for God. We only need to rely on God and relinquish our need to perform for others.

Paul's plea to the Galatian Christians is our plea for the Church today. We pray: "Pour our Your Holy Spirit on us gathered here today..." in the Great Thanksgiving as part of the Holy Communion liturgy every week. God invites us to receive a fresh outpouring of His Spirit every day. There is no hope or security in religiosity and rituals as all hope is found only in Christ being formed in us. It begins with what God will do in us. Will you answer God's invitation to let Christ be formed in you today? From there on, let your actions flow.

### **PRAYER**

Father God, thank You that You want to do a deep work in us to shape our hearts, character, motivations and values. Turn us away from meaningless religiosity and rituals, and our desire to earn the praises of men. Draw us deeper to a rich relationship with You, where Christ may be formed in us that we may reflect You clearly for the world to see. Amen.

### **SUPPLICATION**

- Thank God for His wisdom and will as He works in us to act in order to fulfil His good purpose. Thank God that we only need to rely on Him to work in and through us to be His blessing unto others. Pray for every believer to have a holy discontent for a life of religiosity and rituals, but to desire for a life of authentic faith. Pray for all believers to be God's witnesses wherever God places them be it at home, community or workplace. Pray for the Fruit of the Spirit to be manifested in every believer that all may know the love and grace of God through authentic Christian lifestyle.
- Pray for believers to find the appropriate space and means for Christ to be formed in them, even through the practice of stillness and silence, and enjoy deep communion with God through His Word and Worship. Pray for believers to hunger for the friendship of God, a heart knowledge, and not just head knowledge, of His love. Pray for a faith that grows and matures in constant confession and examination of the heart with God.
- Thank God for the opening of Phase 3 of the Circuit Breaker. Pray that people will continue to practice safe distancing and personal hygiene as well as adhere to all the safeguards as mandated by the government. Pray that we will not let our guard down as our church services extend to an hour in duration and accommodate more worshippers. Pray for all the procedures for safe movement and contact tracing to be effective. Pray for all the volunteers and staff as they man the various stations for safe entry at various worship and wedding services. Pray for continual smooth and glitch-free live streaming so that worship services at home may not be disrupted.

*"...for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose." Phil 2:13*

**If you need any prayer or pastoral care support, kindly contact the pastoral care team via:**

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