A Prayer for Spiritual Growth

O Lord, help me.....

- -to be glad of life because it gives me the chance to love and to work; to play and look up at the stars;
- -to be satisfied with my possessions, but not contented until I have made the best of them,
- -to despise nothing in the world except falsehood and meanness, and to fear nothing except cowardice; to be governed by admirations rather than my disgusts;
- -to covet nothing that is my neighbors except his kindness of heart and gentleness of manners;
- -to think seldom of enemies, often of friends, and every day of Christ.

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Psalm 33: 1-12

¹ Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous. Delight in praise, O you upright.

² Praise the LORD with the lyre; make melody to the Lord with the harp of ten strings.

³ Sing to the Lord a new song; play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

⁴ Upright is the word of the LORD, whose work is done in faithfulness.

⁵ The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.

⁶ By the word of the LORD the heavens were made and all their host by the breath of God's mouth.

⁷ The Lord gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle; and put the deeps in storehouses.

⁸ Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe.

⁹ For the Lord spoke, and it came to be; the Lord commanded, and it stood forth.

¹⁰ The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; and frustrates the plans of the peoples.

¹¹ The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the thoughts of God's heart to all generations.

¹² Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom the Lord has chosen as a heritage.

Romans 4: 13-25

¹³ For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, ¹⁵ because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression. ¹⁶ Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all ¹⁷ (as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; ¹⁸ who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be." ¹⁹ And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰ He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, ²¹ and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. ²² And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness." ²³ Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, ²⁴ but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵ who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

⁹ As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him. ¹⁰ Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. ¹¹ And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, "Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹² When Jesus heard that, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³ But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

¹⁸ While He spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live." ¹⁹ So Jesus arose and followed him, and so did His disciples. ²⁰ And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. ²¹ For she said to herself, "If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well." ²² But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her, He said, "Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that hour. ²³ When Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing, ²⁴ He said to them, "Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him. 25 But when the crowd was put outside, He went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. ²⁶ And the report of this went out into all that land.