

Prayers from Thomas More's *A Treatise on the Passion*

For Humble Obedience

O glorious Blessed Trinity, whose justice has damned to perpetual pain many proud rebellious angels, whom your goodness had created to be partners of your eternal glory: because of your tender mercy, plant in my heart such meekness that I may by your grace so follow the motion of my good angel and so resist the proud suggestions of those spiteful spirits who fell that I may, through the merits of your bitter Passion, be partner of your bliss with those holy spirits who stood and who now, confirmed by Your grace, shall stand in glory for ever.

For Resistance to Temptation

Almighty God, who of your infinite goodness did create our first parents in the state of innocence, with present wealth and hope of heaven to come till through the devil's deceit their folly fell by sin to wretchedness: by Your tender pity of that Passion that was paid for their and our redemption, assist me with Your gracious help so that to the subtle suggestions of the serpent I never so incline the ears of my heart but that my reason may resist them and master my sensuality and keep me from them.

For Devotion to the Passion

O holy blessed Savior Jesus Christ, who willingly did determine to die for man's sake: mollify my hard heart and supple it so by grace that, through tender compassion of Thy bitter Passion, I may be partner of Your holy redemption.

For Ready Response to the Gospel of the Passion

Good Lord, give us Your grace not to read or hear this Gospel of Your bitter Passion with our eyes and our ears in manner of a pastime, but that it may with compassion so sink into our hearts that it may stretch to the everlasting profit of our souls.

For Devotion to the Eucharist

Good Lord, who upon the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb did so clearly destroy the first-begotten children of the Egyptians that Pharaoh was thereby forced to let the children of Israel depart out of his bondage: I beseech You, give me the grace in such faithful wise to receive the very sweet Paschal lamb, the very blessed Body of our sweet Savior, Your Son, that with the first suggestions of sin killed in my heart by Your power, I may safe depart out of the danger of the most cruel Pharaoh, the devil.

For a Happy Death

Good Lord, give me the grace so to spend my life that when the day of my death shall come, though I feel pain in my body, I may feel comfort in soul and – with faithful hope of Your mercy, in due love towards You and charity towards the world – I may, through Your grace, depart hence into Your glory.

To Resist Wicked Counsel

Gracious God, give me Your grace so to consider the punishment of that false great council that gathered together against You that I never to Your displeasure be partner, nor give my assent to follow the sinful device of any wicked counsel.

To Resist Greed

O my sweet Savior Christ – whom Your own wicked disciple, entangled with the devil through vile wretched covetousness, betrayed: inspire, I beseech You, the marvel of Your majesty with the love of Your goodness, so deep into my heart that, in respect to the least point of Your pleasure, my mind may set always this whole wretched world at naught.

For Fervent Love of Christ

O my sweet Savior Christ, who in Your undeserved love towards mankind so kindly would suffer the painful death of the cross: suffer not me to be cold or lukewarm in love again towards You.

For Heaven

Almighty Jesus Christ, who would for our example observe the law that You came to change and, being Maker of the whole earth, would have yet no dwelling-house therein: give us Your grace so to keep Your holy law and so to reckon ourselves for no *dwellers* but for *pilgrims* upon earth that we may long and make haste, walking with faith in the way of virtuous works, to come to the glorious country wherein You have bought us inheritance *forever* with Your own precious blood.

For the Humility to Serve

Almighty Jesus, my sweet Savior Christ, who would deign with Your own almighty hands to wash the feet of Your twelve apostles, not only of the good but of the very traitor too: deign, good Lord, of Your excellent goodness, in such wise to wash the foul feet of my affections that I, with meekness and charity for the love of You, never have such pride enter into my heart as to disdain either in friend or foe to defile my hands with washing of their feet.

For Devotion to the Eucharist

Our most dear Savior Christ, who after finishing the old Paschal sacrifice instituted the new sacrament of Your own Blessed Body and Blood for a memorial of Your bitter Passion: give us such true faith therein and such fervent devotion thereto that our souls may take fruitful spiritual food thereby.

(Modernized by the Center for Thomas More Studies ©2001. For the originals, see volume 13 of *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, Yale University Press, pages 11, 24, 49, 52, 65, 68, 75, 82, 85, 100, 117, 136. No titles are given in More's original prayers.)