

Invocation Prayer :

Our Heavenly Father be with us this morning. Let the winds of thy spirit blow upon us that we may be ^{come alive} refreshed and ^{step forth to meet the day in renewed faith} become alive. Teach us to take time to think of others that worshipping you together we may lose sight of our own worries in troubling ourselves about the distress of others.

Our heavenly Father be with us this morning. May the winds of thy spirit blow upon us that we become alive and face the new day in ^{strengthened} ~~renewed~~ and faith.

May we learn from you to take time to think of others that worshipping you together we may lose sight of our own worries and cease in troubling about the distress of others. We ask this in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ who ever served others.

Amen.

Is God Dead?

On the cover of
On a recent issue of a weekly magazine
with a Canadian insert. These words
were written in red on a black page.
The article setting forth the title
covered almost four pages in the
magazine. When one separated out
the gobbledygook and cleared away
the underbrush of semantics, those
four pages could be condensed into
one paragraph. World populations
divided into two camps. Urban and
rural with the urban fast outgrowing
the rural. The rural still closer
to God because closer to nature, and
living things around them. Birth and
death a daily occurrence. Urban
becoming increasingly convinced of
man's power, over land sea and
air even the stars and the moon.
Unable, because of their manner of
living, to see God at work in nature.
Huddled together in thousands
of congested towns and cities. Human
survival and its struggle ever
renewing the fires of greed. All too often
God is forgotten or given only lip service
one day a week. We do not see Him at

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work among us. because we do not take time to really look for him. Search him out in every day work. So we have the question "Is God Dead?"

A serious question. Not one to be lightly answered or shrugged off. It may be a question some of us find hard to answer. (We remember our loved ones who have passed on. At one time in the history of man death was final. Two thousand years ago God in whom the Christian believes with deepest faith changed the thinking of twelve men and many of their associates when Jesus by his resurrection proved to man that to those who cared to follow him life was eternal. So many that may be the answer to "Is God Dead."

Our society as we know it is prone to pick up a term or saying and use it for their own ends. Many Pastors have used these three words "Is God Dead" to fill their churches. They ^{have} proved to be a church filling phrase in many instances. ^{Our society is} we are averse to read or talk about something we really know

3/ little about. Just a week or two ago we read and heard considerable about another society that used almost the same words. Many people went gleefully home from witnessing the execution to taunt their neighbors with these words your God is Dead! your God is Dead! He saved others himself he could not save! Go back to your comfortable pews and forget this false prophet! Where is your God! On the cross, on the cross! Dead. What did we tell you.

Then the resurrection! The impact of that mystery has surged through two thousand years. Two thousand years of mankind's history its ups and downs its heights and depths. Through the crashing falls of empires and their dark aftermath, into the light of the reformation and now in our day if we look we can see God at work in every moment of our lives. It is not God that is dead but our society!

Stanley Jones - ^{has a story of a G. who returned to his home town asking about a neighbor (received this answer)} quote "no not yet!"

The other day I was talking to a neighbor. He was pointed out to me the place from which he had just

In his vision Ezekiel saw the dead
coming to life when blown upon by the
winds of the spirit of God. God was not
dead he was life in the reviving
winds. ~~The bones representing society~~
Society represented by the bones was dead
but gathered ^{itself} together and became alive
and effective under the winds of the spirit.
This was the history of Israel being repeated
once more and we seem to be repeating
it again today. We will neither listen to
the prophets nor be ~~great~~ ^{still long enough} so that we can
feel the winds of the spirit blow upon
us. So we conclude that God is dead.

In chapter 17 of Ezekiel ~~and~~ the prophet
remarks on the valley of dead bones. These
~~at least~~ fourteen verses are a word picture of
a dead society. Ezekiel in one of his quiet
times must have discovered this valley strewn with
bones of the dead from some war. In his
mind the vision arose that his own people
were little better. They were alive physically,
true, but they might just as well have been dead
as far as their spiritual witness was concerned.

Can it be that in our intense struggle
for material things of this life we become
as the decayed tree or the valley of bones?
Unless we are spiritually alive we might
well be dead.

recently removed a tree. His wife
 had been after him for some time
 to ~~remove the tree~~ ^{get rid of it}. It blocked her view.
 So although the tree was still
 frozen in the ground, a big healthy
 looking tree, he hooked a cable
 on it and with his tractor took a
 good pull. The tree came down with
 a crash. Although looking like a
good healthy tree the inside had
 almost rotted out and it took
 little power to break it off. But the
 root is still there and if not grubbed
 out there will be a healthy growth
 of saplings before long. So society, if
 rotten at the core it cannot stand
 sudden adversity and collapses. But
 a new growth shoots up and out, God's
 plan for his people is eternal and ever
 present if we look for it. If we try to
 understand and study each other we
 find that neglect of the two commandments
 that Christ stressed most often. "Thou shalt
 love the Lord thy God with all thy heart
 and with all thy soul and thy neighbor
 as thyself is the basis of most of our
 modern perplexities. For perplexed we seem
 to be, perplexed to the point of mass frustration.