

A Lenten Prayer for Justice, Mercy, and Humility by Brian Swarts 03-04-2009

The season of Lent reminds us of the renewal that came through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Lent is a time to prepare for the coming of Easter and to celebrate the gift of redemption. Lent is also a time to search for ways we can be part of God's work of redemption and renewal in our world.

As we search for those things that need renewal here and now, we find the global economic crisis gives us a serious issue to reflect on. I believe that we have momentous opportunity in America, where the Spirit is calling us to greater leadership on global poverty and injustice in a time of turmoil. As the global economic crisis increases the number of people vulnerable to extreme poverty, hunger, and disease, it is increasingly urgent for Christians to serve as informed and effective advocates for the poor and the marginalized. While each of us is hurt by hard times, it is the people around the world living on less than \$1/day, facing hunger, thirst, and illness, who bear the greatest burden of this crisis.

That's why, during this Lenten season, we are inviting Christians around the nation to pray for those who have been hardest hit by the global crisis. In prayer, you will be joining "Micah Challenge" campaigns in numerous countries—from Great Britain to Rwanda—who have all committed to pray. Sometime over the next two months gather your family, friends, and church members together in praying our Prayer for Justice, Mercy, and Humility:

Prayer for Justice, Mercy, and Humility

Lord, hear our prayer:

Today we face the season of our redemption during a time of global crisis.

During this season teach us to understand the love that drove you to give up everything to save us all.

Give us the strength that only comes in weakness;

The renewal that only comes through death and resurrection.

Today many of us feel weakened, burdened, and overwhelmed by the challenges and uncertainties that lie ahead.

We ask that your strength be made perfect in our time of weakness.

While each of us is hurt by hard times, it is the people around the world living on less than \$1/day, facing hunger, thirst, and illness, who bear the greatest burden of this crisis.

Just as your weakest hour proved to be the most generous, most life-giving moment in history,

We pray for that out of our own weakness comes a generosity of justice, mercy, and humility for those who bear burdens greater than our own.

Help us to remember that you are the God who, out of nothing, made everything.

The God who still has the power today to remake us.

So let us be remade, not overcome, by our global crisis;

Let us be purified, and not laid low, by injustice, greed, and inequality.

Let us commit ourselves to:

Act justly,
Love mercy,
And walk humbly with you, and with all those
who suffer or want.

This is our moment to change the world.

Because it is at our moment of crisis where your strength and your light, revealed to the world by our faith, become a force that is stronger than fear or death.

Today, move us to become the answer to our prayers.

Give us the strength to respond, in our own time of need, to the needs of those who have the least in our world.

Lead us to be your agents of hope and renewal during this season of redemption.

For it is only in You that we have
the power to change things;
It is only because of You that we have
the promise of renewal;
And yet it is through us that You seek to do all these things.

Amen.