



REFLECTIONS

**The Lord is my light and my salvation —
whom shall I fear?**

**The Lord is the stronghold of my life —
of whom shall I be afraid?**

Psalms 27:1

Prayer for the New Year

Gracious and loving God, we come to you today at the beginning of a New Year. We enter it with the freshness of a new birth. It is a time when much of the old has been washed away and, in some ways, wipes our slates clean. But everything is not new.

We carry illnesses that weaken us, broken relationships that divide us, and wars that place many in harm's way. Still, the New Year brings with it hope for a better world.

Our country was founded on faith in you, dear Lord. We pray for the faith on which we were founded, to be strengthened in our hearts and minds that we may once again become a living example of the might of one nation under God. Guide the leaders of our country, our states, and our cities to make sound decisions that will always be in keeping with your will. But most of all we pray that your peace and your love may be rediscovered throughout our land.

Our needs exceed our abilities to meet them without your power to heal, shelter to protect, and love to bring us peace. So Loving God, even with all our human frailties, scars, and uncertainties at this new beginning, we come to you as newborn children.

And we ask you to bring peace throughout our war-torn world. We ask not only for the end of the wars, but also for peace that only comes through your loving hands. Help us overcome our pride that looks to ourselves as our source of strength; and help us rid ourselves of desires for possessions, power, and position that have crept into our lives as gods we serve.

Gracious God, we seek forgiveness for the wrongs done to you and to our fellow man. We seek help to release our resentments toward those who have harmed us, and we seek forgiveness from those whose lives we have wounded by word or deed. Help restore broken relationships through a reconciliation that will help us love each other as you have called us all to love.

We ask you for healing of the diseases that reduce the quality of life we seek and threaten the breath of life you have so graciously given. Yet, even as we ask for good health, we submit to your will fully knowing that you will not ask more of us than we can bear.

But most of all, Loving God, we seek to live our lives as you would have us live—to love you with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our strength and with all our mind; and, to love our neighbor as ourselves. Help us turn our lives toward Jesus, your son, for only by facing toward him can our lives reflect the Savior.

We ask these prayers, Loving God, in the precious name of Jesus in whose name we pray.

Amen

“You are the light of the world.”

Richard +

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