

Good day

Today I want to pray about privilege. I recently hosted a seminar and one of the speakers, who herself has experienced severe discrimination due to her appearance said "But I do also feel privileged to be able to take up the fight against unfair practises at work as a single, childless person - a fight that many of her colleagues are scared to enter into being afraid of losing their jobs and income for their whole family." She said further "even when we feel discriminated against we might still hold privileges that others don't have."

I believe if we all become aware of our privileges we will be able to live lives that tune into the challenges, disadvantages and discriminations that others experience and by doing so create a more peaceful world.

Let's pray

Dear Lord

Today we want to pray for awareness about our privileges. How much time do we spend complaining about things yet forgetting how many people are suffering? How often do we live out our privileges without acknowledging that many don't have what we have. Lord help us to be conscious that privilege comes in many forms and shapes linked to gender, skin colour, how our bodies look and function, our income, where we live and which language we speak. The work we do, to have a job, the transport we take to work – all of these can bear a privilege.

We ask you for forgiveness God where we discriminate consciously and unconsciously, when we hurt others, when we use language that causes pain – when we dehumanise by not accepting others as fellow human beings. Let us be aware that also in this time of Covid, there is a lot of open and hidden privilege in how we live, work and able to access resources.

Dear Lord it is at times painful to acknowledge our privileges some of which just come to us when we are born in a particular place or with a certain gender or skin colour. Help us to act in humble ways, compassionate and not defensive or guilt-ridden when we understand our privileges.

I want to close with a prayer I found of someone praying about privilege:

Holy God, Lord of heaven and earth, just as Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, so too, we rejoice that you have revealed yourself to us through your gracious will.

Blessed are the eyes that see what God has revealed. But sometimes what we see with our eyes, we do not perceive with our hearts.

Jesus, we desire to not just see, but understand; to not just to hear, but listen.

Lord, you hear the cry of the oppressed and the needy. We are thankful when these cries are our own. But though our own sufferings are real – and we need your help – the truth is that we are a privileged people. We confess that we often choose not see what is before us and our role in it.

In our own life, we have probably not done anything to oppress others. In fact, we have given to the needy and fed the hungry. And it is true that we have worked hard for what we have and where we are.

But it is also true that we have received benefits from our privilege that are not merited. And that others bear the cost of our privilege, too often with their own lives. And for this, we confess.

Blessed are the eyes that see what God has revealed.

Reveal to us that which we do not want to see. Reveal to us the systems of oppression. Reveal to us how we unwittingly perpetuate them.

We come before you with these heavy and difficult things because we know that they are the things that break your heart. As we pray together using the words we learned from Jesus, let us also learn the mercy, justice, and humility that Jesus taught us.

Prayer for Africa and all the world  
Guard our children  
Guide our leaders  
And give us peace. Amen.

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