
A Prayer For Mission, from Daily Morning Prayer

**An article from the *Cathedral Times*
by the Very Reverend Samuel G. Candler,
Dean of the Cathedral of St. Philip**

I say my daily prayers in various ways, but most usually with the office of Daily Morning Prayer (beginning on page 75 of *The Book of Common Prayer*). As I have told students for years, it is amazing "and delightful" how much of the Episcopal Church's prayer book is actually from the Bible. One of my favorite, and most concise, examples of this principle is this rather brilliant prayer, from the morning office:

O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you; bring the nations into your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh; and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP, page 101)

I do not know a lot about the prayer's author, one George Edward Lynch Cotton (Missionary Bishop to Calcutta, India from 1850-1866), except that he was highly active in the education field. However, I do know the Bible verses within that prayer:

Acts 17.26-28 - *From one blood, he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him "though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For "In him we live and move and have our being'.*

Ephesians 2.17 - *So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.*

Isaiah 57.19 - *Peace, peace, to the far and the near, says the LORD; and I will heal them.*

Joel 2.28 - *Then afterward will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.*

Acts 2.17 - *In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.*

For me, the best prayers are like poetry, containing references to the vast scope of God's creation, and yet referring to that wide creation in the most concise way possible. Some of the best prayers are also the most concise. This prayer is considered one of the three prayers "for mission," which is to conclude the prayers of the daily office. So, let us say it often. It expresses our mission most elegantly:

O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you; bring the nations into your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh; and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sam Candler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

The Very Reverend Samuel G. Candler
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