

A VALENTINES DAY PRAYER

Father in heaven, we thank you for your love for us. Thank you for creating us in your image with a capacity and longing for relationship. Thank you for the delights you give us in relationship. We come to you asking that you redeem our relational brokenness and pain, as you love to do.

Forgive us for poor choices where we have not respected our bodies; gone against the good desires you've placed within us; and broken covenants, mistreating others and ourselves.

Empower us to forgive as you have forgiven us. Empower us to reconcile broken relationships in our lives.

Empower us to mature in Christ—both learning from our painful experiences and making godly choices.

Father, we pray for all of us that we may experience your love in Christ without reservation and without condition, and that we will be equipped to love others and ourselves because we have first received love from God. We pray for our children, that you will train them to enjoy their bodies and know love without reservation and without condition in their families.

We pray for our youth and young adults, as they begin to explore relationships, that you will empower them to respect their bodies, understand deeply their femininity and masculinity and both envision and learn how to love well. I pray that you will teach them about forgiveness, mutuality and self control; the equal worth of men and women, as well as the virtues of sexual sobriety, sexual self-respect, sexual faithfulness and sexual purity in thought and deed.

For those of us who are not in the loving relationship we desire, for those of us unattached, whether it is a chosen lifestyle or something involuntary or even imposed by the loss of a partner, I pray for the grace to:

- o Trust you in the present circumstance of longing or loss or contentment
- o To live in the present to your glory.
- o To wait for what is good, godly, and around the bend re relationships.

For those who are called to singleness I pray:

- o For a community of friends where love can be given and received.
- o For a faith community that respects singleness as a worthy lifestyle and calling and not second-place to marriage and family.

Father, may redemptive relationships be common among us. May this be the norm here. May this be the environment within which we raise the children in this community. May this be our gift to the next generation. Fill us with your Spirit for living redeemed lives, we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN