I Saw You

(A Prayer of Benediction for the Lord's Supper or Easter Celebration)

Lord, I want to ask for Your forgiveness. Tonight my eyes were opened as we sang the words to those hymns that I've sung thousands of times. For the first time in my life I was struck by the vastness of Your grace and love for me, and it pierced my heart. I looked at my hands that have so many times brought You shame as I have clinched them in anger. As I have pointed the finger of blame at the innocent, as I have held forbidden fruit—these hands were never pierced. And yet the loving hands that fed and healed and served, those perfect hands of grace were pierced for me.

As we prayed I touched my forehead, I remembered my moments of rage when I accused and fussed and frowned. But my brow was never pierced. And yet Your brow was pierced by thorns. Your wounded head was bleeding. You shed Your blood for me.

Lord, I know that I've heard the story a thousand times. I believed it. And it was true. But tonight . . . it was as if for the first time I looked You in the eyes and I felt the holiness of worshiping a God who died. A God who gave His own life for me.

My feet have never felt the gnawing pain that You endured on the cross that day.

My shoulders have never carried the burden of the world in the shape of a cross.

I have never been stripped of everything to die a sinner's death.

My back never scourged . . .

My face never spit upon . . .

Oh Lord, the agony, the humiliation, the torment—the love.

How could it be?

How could You love me that much?

Tonight, as we took the bread and drank from the cup, I felt the holy presence of Your love.

Thank You, Lord. I don’t understand Your love. I probably never will. But I want You to know that tonight I saw You, and I will never be the same again.