

Pray Like Jesus #3 - The Lord's Prayer

- Alrighty, sermon number three in the Pray Like Jesus series. There's only five, today we're looking at Jesus' prayer, the Lord's prayer, the most famous prayer, from the most famous person in the history of the world. How many of you are somewhat familiar with the Lord's prayer? Our Father, you a little familiar with that? How many of you are not familiar with the offensive things that Jesus says just prior to that? That's where we're gonna start. It's gonna be awesome for two reasons, you need to be offended. Number two, we are over capacity, we need to free up seats. So I need to help. If you had trouble finding parking, I'm not ready to fix that, come back next week, you can park right in the front. It'll be easy. So we're gonna find all the religious people, that's what we're gonna do. 'Cause what Jesus is gonna tell us, here's how not to pray, then he's gonna tell us how to pray because you can't just be for something, you need to also be against that which is against it. So you can't be for Jesus and Allah. You can't be for good and the Raiders, you gotta pick a team. You gotta pick a team. So right out of the shoot, Jesus is gonna tell us, religion is repugnant. This will be fun. Matthew 6, and if you've got a Bible, just go to Matthew 6, that's where we're gonna be. And when you pray, so it's good to pray. Prayers where we talk to God, we listen to God, it's how we build our relationship with God. You must not be like the-

- [Audience] Hypocrites.

- The hypocrites. But he's talking about the religious people. We're gonna talking about them. For they love, they're all about it, to stand and pray in the synagogues, public and on the street corners, the bigger the crowd, the better, the more attention the better. That they may be seen by others. Truly I say to you, they have received their reward, but when you pray, it's good to pray, go into your room. Just between you and God, the whole universe doesn't need to be involved, and shut the door and pray to your Father's in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. What He's talking about here is religious people. And the problem is that most of us when we think of how to pray, we think of the most religious public pious people. "Oh, guy's got a rug, he's facing east, "he must be varsity, know what his doing." No, he doesn't. "Oh, look at those people, they fast, they pray, "they tell us that they're fasting and praying. "They keep posting on Instagram "all of their fasting and praying. "They must be varsity." No they're not. What He's saying is that don't look to religious people. And here's why it is really important for this season of our church to make note, because here's what happens, religious people show up, they act like leaders. They boss people around and they always think that they're the teacher, they never think that they're the student. And we're at that size now, the church is healthy, it's growing. Religious people don't show up until there's people and money and momentum and platform. And then they show up, they're like, "Well, we're here." "Finally there's leaders and teachers." No, we're fine. And so we're there. And let me say this, 'cause I'm just gonna tell you exactly what I think, we're not gonna put this one on the internet. This is gonna be different. Where are we? We're in Scottsdale. Real religious spirit in Scottsdale, Arizona. Little, "We're better than you, we're the purdy people, "we're the wealthy people. "And we're

right, and every issue we're on the-

- [Audience Member] On the right

- "We're on the right. "So we're right." Let me tell you this, it's not enough just to vote for the right candidate, join the right party, drop your kid in a Christian school and like all the correct things on social media. If you don't repent of sin and love Jesus, you're just another religious person.

- [Audience] Amen.

- And all the people from Glendale said amen. I don't mind if you love Scottsdale but I'm trying to get you ready for Heaven. And that ultimately, we need to be very wary and careful because here's what religious people do, they always show up, they assume that they're leaders and they come to tell everyone else what to do. So if there's new Christians, non-Christians or humble people who are like, "I wanna to learn." The religious people are like, "Well, I know what to do. "I'm mature and I'll tell you what to do." The problem with religion people, they're always arguing, they're always fighting, they're always opposing Jesus. Jesus died for sinners, but he was killed by religious people, Don't miss the storyline of the Bible.

- And so what happens is Jesus gets a crowd and then the religious people show up. They try and hijack the conversation by arguing with him and correcting him. They don't come to learn from Jesus, they come to teach Jesus. That's the problem. And the big idea is this, when God shows up, we should shut up, that's the big idea. And so Jesus is gonna teach and then the religious people are going to argue with him and they're gonna hijack the conversation. So what he's saying is, there's a crowd of people like this and he's like, "Hey, when you pray." I can just see Jesus like looking at the religious people, "See over there, okay, you guys are on the left, "I'll look over here, the right. "The religious people are probably somewhere over here." So there's a crowd of people, Jesus is like, "Now, when you guys pray, "don't pray like the religious people." Religious people were very offended. They're like, "We're very Holy pious and good. "We're the good people, not the bad people." Jesus is like, "Actually you're the problem, "not the solution." Religion is sometimes where Satan hides because people wouldn't expect to find him there. And when he talks about is religious hypocrites, now sometimes religious hypocrites are people who preach something that they don't practice or their public life is not the same as their private life. But sometimes hypocrisy is not just being inconsistent with your commitment, it's that everything you're committed to is a lie. Give you an example. God's looking down and there are certain religions say, "Well, you got to pray three times a day "on a rug facing east." God's like, "That wasn't my idea." That whole thing is hypocrisy, it's pretending to be from God, has nothing to do with God. There are whole religions and religious dispositions and even Christian traditions that they in and of themselves are hypocritical, not in that we are seeing people disagree with their ideology, it's that their whole ideology is hypocrisy 'cause none of it comes from God and it pretends to be from God. And let me say this as well, how many of you have heard that Christians are hypocrites? You heard this? We're not. We're not. 'Cause what happens is, a Christian says, we're like, "Oh, they sinned, what a hypocrite." We're not a

hypocrite. Our whole thing is that we're sinners. That's our whole thing. So if we sin, we're not hypocrites. We're consistent. We told you that we're bad and sinful. So when we do bad and we're sinful, don't say, "Hypocrites", say, "You are consistent." You're welcome. Our whole thing is that we're the problem, not the solution, that we're the bad guys and there's only one good guy. Let me tell you a little bit about religious people, well, let me ask you this too, since we have nothing else to do, the world is closed and it's raining, so there's nowhere to go and nothing to do. Of Jesus' 12 disciples, who was the hypocrite? Judas. He pretended to be someone that he wasn't. When it's time to pray, he's like, "I'll pray." When it's time to sing, "I'll sing." Privately, that's not who he is. The word hypocrite, it's a Greek word, it appears like 27 times in the New Testament, means somebody who wears a mask and plays a role and they're faking their true identity, they're hiding their true identity. Jesus talks about these people, "They honor me with her lips, "oh, they pray and sing. "But their hearts are far from me. "Hearts are far from me." Religious hypocrites care more about their public life than their private life. DL Moody, an old preacher once said, "Your character is who you are in the dark." When everybody's looking, that's not who you are. When nobody's looking and only God's looking, that's who you are. Religious hypocrites care more about wowing people than worshiping God. Everybody's like, "Wow, look at them, "they're still singing and praying and fasting. "Wow.' God's like, "No, this isn't for me, this is for you." These are people who treat religion like sports. "I have more points than you, I win." I'm varsity, you're junior varsity, I've outperformed you. Religious hypocrites store up their treasures on earth and never make it to Heaven. Jesus says, "They have received their reward." What he's saying is all they get is here, there's nothing waiting for them there. And lastly, religious hypocrites don't understand the Father Heart of God, that's the problem. Because what happens when you see a religious person, they look so devout, it's impressive. I'll give you an example, a story. I was in the airport some years ago and if you're young, we used to go places, it was crazy. It was crazy. We would leave the house. It was wild. Google it, I'm not lying. So I was going somewhere and I was on a layover, I was going to preach somewhere and I was in an airport and there was a very religious guy. How do I know? He had a big hat. You can always tell the most religious 'cause they have the tallest hat. The closer your hat is to Heaven, the closer you are to God. That's how it works. Big hat, must be in charge. So big hat, religious beard, religious haircut. How do I know? Because no one would choose to have this haircut unless they thought it would get them to Heaven. Religious clothes. And it was his time for prayer. So he stood up right in the middle of the airport, right in the middle of the walkway where all the people are supposed to walk. And he put on a prayer shawl. So well know it's prayer time. Let me just say, whoever invented the prayer shawl was not an alpha male, there is no alpha male like, "We need a shawl. "We need a shawl. "My grandma had a shawl, I need a shawl." And it's so weird, it's like God's in Heaven like, "I wasn't gonna answer the prayer, "but they put the shawl on. "Oh my gosh. "Rock, paper, scissors, shawl. "Now I gotta answer their prayer. "And look at the haircut." So he puts the shawl on and then he folds his hands, close his eyes, he starts rocking back and forth shouting in another language, not praying in tongues, just some other foreign language loudly. And saying the same thing over and over. And you could see, everybody starts watching him 'cause he's drawn a lot attached to himself. And then you could see people are impressed with him. People are like, "Wow. "Wow. "That guy's so devout." I thought this guy is so silly. He's not spiritual, he's

silly and it's sad. So I thought, "You know what? "I'm gonna minister to this guy and read him Matthew 6." Literally this text. I pulled out my Bible. Yep, sniper, scoping in my shot. One shot, one kill. I'm gonna get this. "Ah, yeah, hey sir, while we're here, "I was reading about the hypocrite "who stands in the airport." So it says in the Greek, "Trust me, I'm professional." And so I sit there and I wait and I wait and I wait and I wait, and this guy keeps going for like an hour, just saying the same thing over and over. And finally, I'm like, "Lord, I'd love to minister to him "but I got to catch my flight. "So if you want them to hear Matthew 6, make him stop." He never stopped, I wasn't supposed to minister to him. And so I put my Bible in my bag and I jumped on my flight. Now here's the big idea. People looked at him and you know what they thought, "He is so devout, he is so serious." And here's what I thought, he must have a horrible father. His prayer was a horrible, horrific, horrifying representation of my father. Let me say it to you this way, we learn about prayer not from religious people, but from kids. Jesus says, "Our Father." That's where we're going. So if you want to learn how to pray, don't look to religious people, look to kids who have a dad who loves them and just look at how they talk and listen to him and the relationship that they enjoy with him. So let me say this, if this man had a son that was with them at the airport. And let's say that son wanted lunch. If that son had to go get his hair cut the right way, find the right hat, put on the right clothes, put a shawl over his shoulders, close his eyes, fold his hands and then learn a foreign language and say the same thing over and over for an hour to get lunch from his dad, I would think that that was an abusive father. I would think that that was a negligent and unloving father. I would look at say, "Look at that, boy." I'd say, "What's wrong with that dad." 'Cause you know what? If you love your kid, you should make it very simple for them to talk to you and you should make it very simple for you to talk to them. Amen?

- [Audience] Amen.

- That's a good parent, that's a good dad. I've got five kids, they make requests, and if you don't have kids, just so you know, when you have kids, they come with a lot of requests. And they're not real formal about it. They'll just interrupt you, ask for things. Amen? How many of you have got kids? You've experienced this. And they ask for everything, they're like, "Can I have a pony?" "No." "Can I have a rainbow?" "No." "Can I have a pony riding a rainbow?" "No." "In Jesus name?" "Come on man, now you're manipulating." But they're just very casual and very relational and very earnest about it. Religion misrepresents the Father Heart of God. So you don't take your clues on prayer from religions and religious people. What about spirituality? Religion is more like a boxed lunch. Spirituality is the salad bar, just pick what works for you. Spirituality is silly. Matthew 6: 7-8, and when you pray, it's good to pray. Do not heap up empty phrases. And we do this. Let's just do it, we got nothing else to do. Give me some of the, just strange words that people use in prayer, even Christians, that we would never use just in conversation. But when it's prayer time like, "Oh, this is a flare." Like, "Hallelujah, praise the Lord, "shekhinah, I'm beseeching." God's like, "Whoa, I got to beseech, "two hallelujahs and shekhinah from a guy in a shawl. "I'm for sure gonna answer that one." What are some of the weird words that we use in prayer that we would never use normal language.

- [Audience Member] Hedge of protection.

- Hedge of protection, we're gonna come back to that, sister. It's too good to just leave alone. I've got a whole comedic routine coming up. You're welcome. I was watching Conor McGregor get knocked out in the second round last night. We just found all the anti-Irishmen. Oh, Driscoll's here a little sad to see that. But as Conor got knocked out, I had this little comedic routine, I'm gonna share with you. It either was or was not from God, you can decide in about 10 minutes. What happens, let's just read the rest. Here we go. And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do. The Gentiles are all the silly pagans, just the normal spiritual folk, not the highly religious folk just the generally spiritual folk. For they think that they will be heard by their many words. Like we can wear God out, if we just keep saying the same thing. Do not be like them. Them was very offended. They're like, "This is very judgy. "Our religion is very serious. "Our spirituality is very significant to us. "This is, this is very offensive." Do not be like them for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. How many of you are a parent and you know what your kid needs before they ask you? Sometimes it's obvious. You're like, "You're really wet in the nether region." "I think." "Is there anything I can do for you?" "You need a change?" "Yeah, you do. "You spilled your drink, you know what you need?" "Your drink. "You crashed your bike, you know what you need?" "A hug and a helmet, that's what you need." You can see your kid and you know that they got a need. And when we bring our need to God, it's not that He doesn't know, it's that we're inviting Him. We're inviting Him. 'Cause He loves us and we want Him in all of our life. Now what he's comparing and contrast here, before he gets into prayer, talks about religious prayer, spiritual prayer. Religion, highly formal. Spirituality, informal. How many of you, raise your hand, you grew up in a more religious home, lot of rules, traditions, here's how you do it, paint by numbers kit, this is how you do it. How many of you grew up in a religious home? Notice they immediately raised their hands. Very obedient people. Good job. Good job. You're like, "Well that's the rule." So how many of you grew up in the more spiritual home? Your parents were hippies, you smoked weed, they're not gonna raise their hands, they're like, "Nah, I don't do rules and leadership." So how many of you were one and then you tried the other? How many of you were in the religious home and you're like, "That's it, I'm getting high. "I'm Rastafarian. "I can't even spell it, but that's what I is." How many of you started really spiritual but it was no structure and you became very religious, especially when you had kids. I gotcha. So he's saying don't be religious, don't be spiritual. Have a relationship with God as Father, it's very personal, very warm, very intimate. Now there are a lot of ways that this vague spirituality shows up. One of the most popular is this teaching called the law of attraction. You heard of this? The law of attraction is this, we don't know if there is a God, We just think that all of creation is God or God is in all of creation, pantheism or pantheism. So what we do, we just send out thoughts to the universe and then we attract things to us. So money and mate, I just say money mate, and then here comes a mate with money. And you talk this to these people like, "Who are you praying to?" They're like, "I pray to the universe." Let me say, that's broad, that's rather broad. I would never go to the bank and be like, "I have all this money, I'd like to make a deposit." "What account?" "Any account. "It matters not to me." I just beseech the bank, just pick one, whatever. No, I want my money to go into the right account and I want my prayer to go to the right God. And you can pray to the universe and Satan is happy to hear an

answer to that prayer 'cause he doesn't mind if he answers your prayer, as long as he damns your soul That's where you get counterfeit religions. People are like, "God answered my prayer." Some divine being did, but it may not be God. Do not be deceived, test the spirits, not every spirit comes from God. While you're sending out to the universe, the universe may be the name of a demon and that demon is happy to answer your prayer. And we see this all the time, this vague general spirituality in corporate training. Let's talk about your job. How many of you, your job has given you some wacky, weird, kind of religious woo-ha, spiritual whatnot, I'm trying not to say certain words. And it's in the name of sort of leadership development and corporate health. A lot of this goofiness has come in through corporate wellness and training. And so let me say this, you're in Arizona. I know you can't tell 'cause all the license plates say California. But you're in Arizona. You're in Arizona. In Arizona, what is the most spiritual place?

- [Audience] Sedona.

- You can't say like that. Sedona. You can say it like that. Sedona. And if you go to Sedona, it's very spiritual. No spirit. Our goal is not to be spiritual, but to be spirit filled. Sedona's got a lot of spirit. Doesn't have the Holy Spirit. You go to Sedona, what do you get? You get witchcraft. You can buy crystals. They have a thing called, you've seen the rock stacked in Sedona. I was like, "What is that? "Is that soft serve for aliens? "What is that?" Everywhere there's the stacked, "Ooh, that's the vortex, vort, vort." What? The vortex. "So what a vortex does, it channels the energy." You know what I do? I hike Sedona and knock them fricking over. Just knock them over. Knock them over. "Oh, you're ruining the energy." "I feel fine, I'm good, I'm fine." "In fact my chakra is all aligned now. "And my energy's now consistent. "I feel very vortexy." It's just silliness. And right now there's like a bunch of people in Sedona, wearing tie dye, drinking decaf green tea, smoking a joint, sitting in the lotus position, trying to get energy from a red rock. True? "Oh, it's got such good energy." Really? So if I'm hiking in Sedona, my phone's dying, can I plug it into the rock 'cause it's got so much energy? What are we talking about? Amen?

- [Audience Member] Amen.

- Are you offended?

- [Audience Member] No.

- If not, it's coming. But it's that vague spirituality. What he's saying is, "If you wanna know how to pray, "don't learn how to pray like that." So let me say a couple of things. Number one, Christianity is God centered, spirituality is consumer centered, that's the problem. You hear this all the time with spiritual people, they're like, "Well, that works for you and this works for me. "Whatever works for you." What if it doesn't work for God? What if God's like, "That doesn't work for me?" You're like, "Well, it works for me." Let me tell you, it won't work when you stand before God. You can stand before God and be like, "I've got a joint and a crystal, am I good?" No. You need Jesus, sir, ma'am That may have worked for your life but if it doesn't work for your eternal life, it doesn't work when you need it the most. But ultimately it's consumer centered and we

treat religion, spirituality and philosophy like we do a salad bar. "I want that. "I don't want that. "Whatever works for me." It makes me the center, not God the center. Number two, it's good to take God seriously, but not yourself. Part of the problem with religion and spirituality, it takes people very serious, it doesn't take God very seriously. And it certainly doesn't take his word very serious. So I don't think we should make fun of God. But I think if something is an offense to God then we should not treat it with a lot of respect, if it's disrespectful to our God. And let me say this, that even as Christians, we have these empty phrases that we heap up. And sometimes we just say stuff 'cause you go to a prayer meeting, you're like, "I don't know, they said it, I'll say it." So how many of you grew up Christian home, Christian school, youth group, Christian college? You can help me. I grew up Catholic behind an airport next to a strip club. So there's a lot of evangelicalism I still don't get. So I'm gonna need you to be a tour guide and translator. I want to know, number one, what does this mean? When God closes a door, he opens a-

- [Audience] Another.

- So you've heard this. What does that mean? Where is it? It's in first and second nowhere. It's a major theme in first and second nowhere. And it's a weird thought because if someone's doing something right they go through the door, the person who comes through the window? That's a criminal. If someone's coming through your window, we're in Arizona, what do you do?

- [Audience] We kill him.

- You shoot them, that's why you moved to Arizona. You're like, "I think I could shoot someone. "I'm gonna leave the window open." I'm just praying, "Lord, open a window." So the prayer doesn't make any sense, "Lord, do you want me to be a shot criminal?" How about this one? A hedge of-

- [Audience] Protection.

- Protection. What does that mean? Do I get foliage, is it a plant, how does it travel with me? In a pot? How does this work? Is this like "Lord of the Rings" Where they had the warrior trees? Is this like foliage that's also warrior relationship, how does this work? Hedge of protection. How many of you prayed this prayer? Okay, okay. How's it going?

- I see no hedge, I see no foliage for any of these prayers. So here here's the one I don't get either, help me with this, traveling, we pray for traveling.

- [Audience] Yes.

- Traveling? So there's no mercy unless you're traveling? You're like, "I'm home. "I'm host." My whole question is, traveling mercies, do the traveling mercies continue, let's say you're at an intersection, you stopped? You're technically not traveling, so is there no mercy? So in that

moment, if you're not under the traveling mercies, is that where you pray for the hedge of protection? Just make sure you're always covered. Here's the one I really don't understand, "Lord, please bless this food to "the nourishment of our bodies." That really depends on what you're eating. It has very little to do with your prayer, has way more to do with your dietary choice. God's in Heaven like, "It's broccoli, "whether you pray or not, that's what it's gonna do, "it's gonna nourish your body. "I custom designed it, you're welcome, "either way, nourish your body. "Churros, don't even pray." It's fried down with sugar. "Lord, please bless this churros "to the nourishment of my body." Lord like, "No." "Okay. "Lord, please put a hedge of protection around the churros." "No." "Lord, as I eat the churros, "please give it a traveling mercy." "No." Amen? Every one of us, we've got a little silliness in us. Here's the big idea, take God seriously, not yourself. Now let me make it serious, maybe for a moment. Question, of all the places on planet earth right now that people would consider the holiest place to pray, where would that be? The Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. I've been there. It's a tragic place. It's a heartbreaking place. It's an unfortunate place. The temple was what we had until we got Jesus, once we got Jesus, we don't need it anymore. You got Jesus, you got all you need. So God is holy, we're unholy, God's in Heaven, we're on Earth. How do we meet with God? Well, we can't go to God, so God creates a space where He comes to meet with us. He calls it the temple. And in the center of the temple was the Holy of Holies, that's the presence of God on Earth. And it's the connecting point between Heaven and Earth. And overseeing the temple was a high priest who would be the mediator between us and God, and what he would do, he would offer sacrifices in our place for our sins because the wage for sin is death. And Jesus comes and He basically says, "You don't need this anymore. "All of that was getting you ready for me. "And now that I'm here, you don't need it." So Jesus dies, rises, returns to Heaven, 70 AD, the temple is destroyed. People are like, "Well, we need to go to a holy place." His name is Jesus. "We need a priest." Our great high priest is Jesus. Well, we need to offer a sacrifice for our sins. Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, he is our passover lamb who was slain. Jesus died for our sins. His shed blood is our forgiveness. Jesus is my temple. Jesus is my priest. Jesus is my sacrifice. Jesus is my everything. And so I don't need to go to Israel, I need to go to Jesus. And so what happens? The temple's destroyed but there's a wall that is still up, just a wall, just a regular old wall. Have you ever seen a wall? It's like that. It's just a wall. People fly in from around the world, they make these pilgrimages. And they get very emotional. And I've been there and they get close to the wall. "It's the wall." It's just a wall. Then they write down a prayer and then they emotionally walk up to the wall and they put the prayer in the wall. And I asked some of the people as they were walking away from the wall, "Why did you put the prayer on the wall?" They were very emotional. They said, "I just wanted to get my prayer close to God." I think the Wailing Wall is where God wails. And then God looks down, He's like, "You need Jesus. "If you wanna get your prayer to me, "I don't have a mailbox in Jerusalem. "I have a mediator between Heaven and Earth.

- [Audience] Amen.

- "His name's Jesus." I just wanna tell everybody, we pray by the Spirit, through the Son, to the Father, if you want your mail delivered, you don't give it to God's mailbox, you give it to God's

mediator. Give it to Jesus. You can't get your prayers any closer to God the Father, than if you pray to Jesus. And what is heartbreaking is all of these people they're just doing what all the other religious and spiritual people are doing, but it's not helping. It's not helping. Because if it's not Jesus, it's not true. If it's not Jesus, it doesn't help, if it's not Jesus, it's not reality, if it's not Jesus, it's not God. So Jesus here is teaching us how to pray. And he's the one who knows how to pray. And he's telling us how not to pray because how many of us religious people or spiritual people, we just do what they do because we assume they know what they're doing. And Jesus is, "No. "Look at kids who have a dad who loves them "and look at that relationship." God's a Father, you're His child, have that kind of relationship and conversation with the Father. So now we'll get into the Lord's prayer, I'll read the whole thing and then we'll unpack it in a few hours together. Matthew six, I don't know why you're laughing, I was just telling you where we're going. Pray, so it is good to pray, pray then like this, "Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be Your name. "Your kingdom come, Your will be done, "on Earth as it is in Heaven. "Give us this day, our daily bread and forgive us our debts, "as we have also forgiven our debtors. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. "For if you forgive others their trespasses, "your heavenly Father will also forgive you. "But if you do not forgive others their trespasses, "neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Let me unpack this. We deal with it in succession. Firstly, he talks about our, this is a remarkable statement. God is the Father, Jesus is a big brother and that we are a family, that's what he's saying. We do believe that you should have a personal relationship with Jesus or with God the Father I should say through Jesus, but your personal relationship with God includes other persons. I'm a dad, I got five kids. I love my kids with all my heart, we got the most amazing kids. I have a personal relationship with each one of them but they have a relationship with each other. When you become a Christian, you get a new Father and a new family. And it's not just my Father who is in Heaven, That is our Father. It's our Father. And so how many of you, when you became a Christian, all of a sudden Christians started to feel like family. See we have a family of birth and we have a family of new birth, we have a family of our physical birth, we have family of our spiritual birth. And I love my family of my physical birth and they love Jesus, but I'll tell you what, I meet people and they feel like family 'cause they have the same Holy Spirit. And it's our Father, so we're brothers and sisters to use the language and we're family. And so God wants you to be connected to the Father and to the family. And that's what he talks about with Our Father. So let me speak firstly to those of you who are connected to the family, but not the father. Maybe you have Christian parents, you have Christian friends, maybe some Christians brought you, maybe there's some nice Christians in your life and they love you and they care about you, and they're trying to help you. We're so honored and glad to have you but right now you need to make the most important decision that you will ever make. It's the decision that really determines all of your eternal destiny and that are you gonna receive Jesus? See Jesus here teaches us to pray, and the thing that He's gonna tell us in a moment that what we need the most is forgiveness for sin. And then Jesus is gonna go to the cross and He's gonna die in your place for your sins. He's gonna pray for you, "Father, forgive them." And He's gonna answer that prayer by dying for you. It's all Jesus. And we're so glad to have you as part of our extended family. But the question is, do you know the Father? Have you been connected to the Father through the Son? Have you given Jesus your sin and had Him introduce you to the Father? Many of you become Christians, it's

pretty remarkable how many people have become Christians here recently, it's supernatural. We've been praying for you just as Jesus was praying for you. And we love you. And we don't want to just enjoy life with you, we want to enjoy eternal life with you. We don't want this to just be something that you enjoy, this relationship with God's people. We want you to really meet the God who's behind all the goodness that he's poured out on your life. So this is the day where you say, "Jesus, I'm a sinner. "And I receive you as my savior." Some of you, you have a relationship with a Father but you don't have a relationship with the family. You all about your personal relationship with God, there's people that every week listen online. And I know some cities and states are closed, but let me say this, you can't do what the Bible says in isolation. Some 56 times in the New Testament, it says love one another, pray for one another, care for one another, bear one another's burdens. Endure with one another, has all these one another's, you can't do that by yourself, it requires being in relationship with other people. That ultimately, when God said it's not good to be alone, that was before sin entered the world and things have gotten much worse, not better. And so let me say this, you may have God as your Father, but have you picked your family? Do you have your church family? And some of you have church hurt. Someone said or did something in the past that was hurtful or harmful. And let me say, I'm sorry for that, but that's what happens in every family. How many of you are parents? How many of you know that your kids did not grow up with perfect parenting? You made some mistakes and the kids need to forgive you so you can have a family. In the church family, the parental role is the pastoral role, its leadership. We are going to make mistakes. I am going to make mistakes. Some of you would argue, "I have been doing so for 38 minutes." And there's enough evidence to convict. But it is not that we are perfect, but that we have a perfect Father and He's the one who pours out grace so we can forgive one another and have a family. Our Father, this word is crucial. When a word is God's word, and then it is accompanied with the power of God's spirit, it is revolutionary and changes the world. This word father is that kind of word. That ultimately in the Old Testament, we dealt with this in one of the earlier sermons in this series, about 15 times in the Old Testament, the Bible is two parts, Old Testament and New Testament. Old Testament, before Jesus came. New Testament, Jesus came and then the church follows in his wake. In the Old Testament, about 15 times, God has referred to as Father, it's always national, not personal, an individual. So God is the Father of the nation of Israel, He's not my father. All of that changes with the Son of God, Jesus Christ coming from Heaven, setting foot on Earth, 165 times, Jesus refers to God as Father. He changes human history. There is no indication that any Jewish leader ever referred to God as Father personally and publicly, prior to Jesus. this was unique in world history. And He often speaks of Father in the context of prayer. The word means literally father or dad. Some of your Bibles will translate this word, Abba. It doesn't mean daddy. How many of you have heard God pray to as daddy God? I heard that once, I threw up in my mouth, please don't do that. Daddy God is something that is a grown man, I don't call my father daddy. I'm a grown man. I wear boots, I have a mortgage. My bangs are thin. I don't believe in socialism. I'm a grown man. I'm a grown man As a grown man, I don't refer to my dad as daddy, if I did, my daddy would drug test me. I call my dad, dad, pops or father, all basically meaning the same thing. Respectful. This word for father is what you would call your dad whether you were a little kid or a grown adult. Father. Jesus tells us to pray to God as Father. Let me say something to the dads, how many of you are dads? How many of you are

dads? The two relationships that God often uses to utterly transform a man is his relationship with the Holy Spirit and the relationship with his daughter. My daughters, I'm telling you, I would be a different human being if I didn't have my girls. And I didn't really understand the fatherhood of God and I love my boys, hear me in this, I don't play favorites. But something about my girls growing up, they would call me dad, daddy, father. And it dawned on me, God has shared his title with me, then I want you to receive that. If I'm mean, is she gonna think that He's mean? If I don't care, is she gonna think that He doesn't care? If I find her to be a burden and not a blessing, will she assume that He finds her to be a burden not a blessing. Because God shared His sacred title with me as a young father, it was really impressed in my soul, I need to live up by the grace of God, as best as I'm able to this sacred title that the Father has shared with me, that when my kids, especially my girls hear father, it brings a smile and not a terror, that they think of the safest place not the scariest place. That they think of the most loving person, not the most dangerous person. Our Father. Furthermore, there's a theological group, it's called reform theology, I'm not gonna get into all of it. And I am reformed-ish. But they tend to emphasize the sovereignty of God. So what happens in every theological system, one of the errors they make, they pick one of God's attributes and they elevated above the other. So what the progressives or the liberals do, "God is love. "Therefore nobody's going Hell "and you could sleep with whoever you want." No. God's also holy, God's also just, God's also a law giver. And if Jesus died, then we've done some things that are that bad. And what will happen in reform theology, they'll say that God is sovereign. And then the question that some have is this, "Why pray if God is sovereign?" We pray because he's our sovereign Father. I love the term father because a father is a sovereign, but He's a loving, gracious, empathetic, present, generous, helpful sovereign Father. See my kids ask me for stuff because I'm the father and I'm the sovereign in our household. And they know that I will do anything I can to bless them. I adore my kids. I love them. I want good for them. I would give anything to them. I would do anything for them. And my heavenly Father is perfect and He lacks nothing. And if he's perfect and He lacks nothing, that's the person I'm going to bring my request to. Amen?

- [Audience] Amen.

- "If your dad is all powerful, all knowing, "all loving, always present and there to help, "why would you ask him for anything?" That's the craziest thing I've ever heard, that's exactly why I'm gonna ask him. He actually cares and he actually helps. He's not just sovereign, He's a father. Some of you, you've got these attributes of God but you don't have a personal relationship with God. For some of you, God is a concept, not a Father. He's a theological system not a father. He's a father. He's a really perfect father. And my hope and prayer and goal for you men is that we would have the Father's heart and that when children, especially our children and grandchildren experienced us, they experienced the Father Heart of God through us. That's my hope. 'Cause you know what this world needs? More fathers. Jesus starts as prayer, Our Father. Nothing gets straightened out until you start with the Father. And once you understand, God is Father. And then you get the fathers to have the Father's heart, then you start to work out, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. The problem in our world is this, we need more good dads, physically and spiritually, we need more good dads. We have

a problem that politics won't fix, that elections won't fix, that more debt more won't fix, that more riots won't fix, that more protests won't fix. And that is that people are broken and only the Father can heal them. And people need to be parented and only fathers can raise them. Our Father, that's where it starts. As simple as it sounds, it's revolutionary. In Heaven, what he's talking about here is that God rules one reality that exists in two realms. My wife, Grace and I wrote a book called "Win your War," we deal with this in detail. But the big idea is this, you're one person in two parts, you have a physical body and a spiritual soul. Part of you is seen, part of you is unseen, that God rules and reigns both the seen and the unseen realm. That just as there are people in this realm, there are divine beings in that realm. They are called angels, watchers, holy ones, hosts, the seat of the gods, the court in judgment, the host of Heaven, the prince of the host, cherubim surfing, archangels, the commander, prince, chief, Lord, divine council, stars, Morningstars, and the Sons of God, they're all these divine beings in addition to human beings, they're spirit beings in addition to physical beings, God rules and reigns over both realities. There are times when someone in this reality, this realm gets to visit that reality, that realm, happens with Isaiah, happens with Daniel, it happens with Jeremiah and it happens in the New Testament with John. And let me say this, that when we pray and worship, and prayer is what we do individually, worship is how we pray collectively. In a bit, we're gonna sing, singing is a form of praying. Praying is where we make our requests individually known. Worshiping is where we declare God's praises together, but it's a form of prayer. What happens when we pray and worship is we are in the seen realm, we access the unseen realm. It's a profound mystery, it's supernatural. I don't fully understand it but I fully believe it because the Bible clearly teaches it. I'll give you one example in Revelation 5, he says our Father in Heaven, and so what is it like in that unseen realm? Revelation 5 is an occasion where John, he's one of Jesus' disciples, he's in this world and he gets to appear into that world. And it says this, it says the four living creatures, these are probably divine beings. And the 24 elders, these are probably departed saints, people who knew and loved the Lord and they died now they're in his presence in the unseen realm. They fell down before the Lamb, you need to know this Lamb is Jesus. You need to know that Jesus is alive right now. He's not just a historical figure, He's a living Lord. He doesn't just exist in the past, He begins at no point, He has no beginning or end, He's eternal, He's the creator, He's not created. He defeated death and He's alive right now. And the Bible says that the Father rules and reigns, and that He is seated in the unseen realm at the right hand of the Father. And before the Father and the Son right now, our departed saints in divine beings. And they fell down, so there's this honor, this reverence. Each holding a harp. So they have instruments. They've got a band in Heaven. Some of you like, "I don't like the band." Better get used to it they're gonna be playing forever. And golden bowls full of incense which are the prayers of the saints and they sang a new song. It's talking about prayer and worship in the unseen realm, our Father in Heaven. So how many of you have ever lit incense? Ever done that? How many of you, your scented candle folks? My wife as a scented candle person. What happens when you light a- Why do you light centered candle? Why do you light incense? You like the fragrance and as you watch it, the smoke and the fragrance rise. The picture in Revelation 5 is that when we sing and pray, it's like incense that ascends into the unseen realm, into the presence of God. That right now, angels, divine beings and departed saints, they're singing and praying. When we sing and pray, we join them, our soul connects with that realm.

That's why revelation, healing, and supernatural things happen in worship and prayer because we're connecting with the unseen realm, the supernatural. That's why some churches who tend to be big on worship and prayer. You're like, "Wow, they seem to have a lot "more supernatural activity." Yeah, because they're connecting with the unseen realm, they're inviting the unseen realm. And the imagery here is this, is that right now in the presence of God, it's like a bowl. And it's the prayers of the saints, you know what those are? Those are your prayers. Your prayers ascend into the unseen realm. They're collected in the presence of God. And then they are sweet in His presence. The prayers you pray, they go to the Father in Heaven. They're heard by the Father in Heaven. They're answered by the Father in Heaven. They're cherished by the Father in Heaven. He goes on to say, "Hallowed be Your name." This is the name of God is to be personal and respectful, there's a tension and a balance. Our Father hallowed be Thy name, this is a very warm, personal title for God, Father, hallowed be Thy name. And what tends to happen is we tend to err in one of two directions, we get too casual and informal with God. All of a sudden He's our homeboy. I heard a college student recently refer to Jesus as J-Dog. King of Kings, Lord of Lords, dog of dogs. Nah, doesn't work. He's not J-Dog, He's Jesus Christ. Jesus isn't your homeboy, He's your Lord, He's not your buddy, He's your creator. Others of us err too much on the formal, the respectful but we lose the warm and personal. So you're all about hallowing God's name, but you don't really know God is loving Father. There's a tension here. Which way would you err? Are you more casual or more formal? Are you more personal or are you more professional in your view of God? There's a tension and a balance. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. This is a big concept at the Trinity church, and that is that when all is said and done, two cultures will remain, that is all. Heaven and Hell. You and I live between the two right now. And the decisions we make every day either invite Heaven down or they pull Hell up. What do you think is happening most right now on the Earth? We're pulling Hell up. We're not inviting Heaven down. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done is saying that Heaven has a culture of love and forgiveness and truth and grace. And that Hell has that opposite counterfeit culture. And that when we pray, we're praying for God's kingdom to come and then we're aligning ourselves with the values and the culture of God's kingdom. If you're gonna pray for the kingdom to come, you need to tell the truth 'cause that's the kingdom, and a lie is Hell. You need to do what's right not what's wrong because that's Heaven not Hell. You need to obey, not disobey because that's Heaven not Hell. You need to give grace and not law because that is Heaven not Hell. You need to give forgiveness not bitterness because that is Heaven not Hell. And so we're praying for the kingdom to come and God's will to be done. And then he goes on, "Give us this day, our daily bread." We tend not to really take this prayer seriously because we already have today's bread and tomorrow's bread and the bread for the day after that. We're the people that have refrigerators, cupboards, pantries, deliveries. God's been so generous to us, He's answered this prayer so thoroughly that He's given us the daily bread for the next 30 days. In the Exodus, God's people would pray for their bread every day and they got it every day. There are people around the world that still pray for their daily bread and they don't know what they're gonna eat today. By praying for our daily bread, it also opens our heart to pray for those who lack daily bread. And if we have today's bread and tomorrow's bread, it should open our hearts to answer their prayer and share our bread 'cause it's ultimately His bread. Forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors what he's talking about here,

he uses the language of sin and debt synonymously, I think it's in Luke 11, He says, "Forgive us, our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us." Here he says forgive us our debts. Sin and better synonymous, sin is the debt that we owe to God. It's a spiritual debt. That's either paid by us in Hell or it's paid by Jesus on the cross. And this praying for forgiveness is something that Jesus never had to pray for. There's a whole movement, What Would Jesus Do? Which is okay. But one thing Jesus would never do is repent of his sin, that's something we have to do because we are sinners, so Jesus here teaches us how to pray for our sin, something that He never had to do because He never did sin. But let me say this, some of you need to accept forgiveness. Some of you, Satan has haunted you and tormented you, some of you, you keep reliving the worst day of your life and it affects every day of your life. For some of you, there things you have said, there are things you have done. There are things that you've failed to say and things you've failed to do. And the reason you're burdened by them is because they were wrong. The reason that it troubles you is you're made in the image and likeness of God and God has given you a conscience and you were made for more. And Jesus died to answer that prayer so that your sins could be forgiven. And I want you to receive this gift of forgiveness through Jesus Christ. This is where religion always tells us what we can do to be forgiven. And it's always something we need to do, it's not something that Jesus has done. And spirituality basically tells us that we're good people who don't need to be forgiven which is a deception and a lie. We're bad people who do need to be forgiven and we can't earn forgiveness, it needs to be Jesus doing something that we can't do to give us a gift that we cannot earn. If you've never received forgiveness or maybe you've received forgiveness in general but not for something in specific, this is where Jesus wants you to give that sin to Him and to receive that forgiveness through Him. He wants to unburden you, He wants to release you, He wants to free you, He wants to heal you, He wants to help you because you need Him. "And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil." This world is filled with temptation and behind it as evil, and some of your translations will say the evil one. So Satan is at work through the evil of the world to provide temptation to get you and I into lots of trouble. My question to you would be, what temptation is most tempting to you? We've all got our thing. They've got their thing. You've got your thing. We've all got our thing. And what we do when we pray against temptation and evil, what we're saying is I know that I have a weakness or a vulnerability here, and I know behind that is evil, and I know behind that is the evil one. So I wanna connect this temptation with that evil. And I wanna pray offensively before the temptation comes. And I wanna pray that God will give me the grace to say no to the temptation and to say yes to the Lord, so that I can live in the freedom that God intends for me. What do you need to be praying about? What temptation do you need to be praying against? And the point is this, too often times we make the decision when we face the temptation, we should make the decision in prayer before we face the temptation. Meaning, if something temps you, you're talking to God about that and making your decision before you're given your opportunity. Now the last section is quite shocking. This is Jesus' paradigm, his precedent, his pattern for prayer, and he ends with forgiveness. And he devotes the majority of his time and energy to forgiveness. I'll read it to you. If you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive you. I didn't sleep much last night, I don't have any notes here. What I felt like I was supposed to do is just pray for you and then just verbal process for awhile and just

tell you whatever comes to mind. So Father, we invite the Holy Spirit. And Father, we don't want to just have a sermon about prayer, we wanna pray. We all wanna pray, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done. And Lord, if these are the final words of Jesus' prayer, they must be the most important. And God I'm asking that you would just bring to mind and let me verbal process out of love for these dear people who give me the honor of teaching them the scriptures. And Holy Spirit, I invite you to apply to their hearts, their minds, their lives, whatever you would have for them. And we pray against the evil one, we pray against the temptation to hold onto bitterness. And we ask for the freedom and deliverance that comes in Jesus name. Amen. I guess I'll just talk to you about forgiveness. This is just you and me. I'm seeing the one of the worst days of my whole life. That's just what I'm seeing. I'd been a pastor preaching 20 some years, family and I had a very long battle. And we agreed to stay in the battle and then God released us. He spoke audibly to my wife, Grace and I. And I was not doing well, pickets, protests, death threats, helicopter overhead, just craziness, lots of lies, good Lord, it was insane. Worse season in my whole life. And one day I was pastoring 15,000 people and the next day I was pastoring six, Grace and the kids. And I got up one day, and I wasn't doing well. Just physically, I was bearing a lot of burden. And I came out into the living room and there's Grace and the five kids and they're all wearing their pajamas, and it looked kind of organized, like they're all waiting. And I was like, "What are we doing?" They're like, "Well, do you know what day it is?" It was like, "Nope." I didn't even know what day it was. I was that shellshocked. They said, "It's a Sunday. "We can't go to church, but we need to have church. "So we're waiting for you. "You're our pastor. "And you need to teach the Bible, dad." So I sat down. We're all in our pajamas in the living room. I don't have a sermon prepped, I didn't know it was Sunday. It doesn't matter, I'll still talk. I just prayed and I couldn't stop crying. And I just was so concerned for my family. And God led me to Ephesians 4, be kind, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God and Christ has forgiven you. Don't give the enemy a foothold, get rid of all bitterness. Did a Bible study on Satan, the culture of Hell is the place of unforgiveness. Satan and demons are never forgiven, they're never forgiving. If you don't forgive, you're inviting Satan and the demonic and Hell into your life Says don't grieve the Holy Spirit there in Ephesians 'cause the Holy Spirit wants to come down from Heaven, bring forgiveness, not just as a gift for you to enjoy, but as a gift for you to share. And I'll be honest with you, in that moment, I started thinking of all the people who had said and done wrong against us. And then I realized that just like this prayer, I guess the Holy Spirit just showed me this. Here in Jesus' prayer, he talks about repenting of your own sin and then forgiving people for their sin against you. So before I talked about the sins that were committed against us, I needed to own my own sin with my family. So I looked at grace in the kids and I asked their forgiveness for the things I had said and done to participate in this the most painful horrific demonic season of our whole life. And they forgave me. From that moment. There has been a supernatural anointing on her family. When you're sinned against, if you don't forgive, you're literally pulling torment up from Hell into your life. And if you're married, into your marriage and if you have a family, it's into your family. If you will forgive, you're inviting the Holy Spirit to come and anoint you, and if you're married, your marriage, and if you're a parent, your children. That ultimately, I'm very sorry for what you've been through, I don't know who did it but I don't want you to be tormented, I'm your pastor, I want you to be anointed. This really hit me. There was one day I was talking to somebody backstage between services. I was sitting in my

study or in the living room where I had a library. Our youngest daughter doesn't even remember this, I was just sitting there and I was very emotional and distraught and I didn't know what was gonna happen to my family, I had no idea that God would have this for us. She came up, she kissed me on the top of the head, which is what she does. I always kiss her on the top of the head. I'm sitting down, so she kissed me on the top of the head. She doesn't even remember this conversation, she was little, this was, she was like 10 or 11. She said, "Daddy, I know what's happening." I was like, "Really? Please tell your dad, I don't know what's going on." She said, "It's like the story of Joseph. He was a little arrogant, said some things he shouldn't, his brothers got jealous, "threw him in a hole, left him for dead "But he forgave them and then God blessed him "and then he got to rule and help a lot of people "because he knew how to forgive." That's my 10, 11 year-old daughter prophesying over my life. She said, "So dad, we just need to sit in the hole "and forgive him and then wait for God "to get us out of the hole and bless us." See Joseph, he was the most anointed because he did the most forgiving. The most anointed person is Jesus Christ because he's done the most forgiving. The more forgiveness you give, the more anointing you receive. I'm sorry for what you've been through but if you will forgive, the anointing will be equal to the forgiving. And let me say this, the people that we tend to get bitter against and struggled to forgive, it's the people that we tend to love the most. And I'm sorry for that. I sinned against a guy and I heard him some years ago, I didn't even know I had. He taught me a lesson. He was a young man going out to plant a church and I thought I'd led him well, loved him well, I thought I did right by him. So I was meeting with them before he went out to plant. And I just said, "Is there anything I can apologize for, "own repent of, any burdens that you were carrying "that I can lift off of you?" I was trying to be a good spiritual father. And I thought he'd say, "You were awesome. "You and Jesus, I can hardly tell the difference." It didn't go like that. He immediately started weeping. And this is a man, strong young man. And I said, "Okay, I obviously hurt you, "please tell me what happened." 'Cause I had no idea, I couldn't remember. And he said, "Well, on this day." He had the day, the month, the time of day, he knew the room we were in, he knew what we were both wearing. He knew exactly what I said and quoted it verbatim. You know what that means? He had been reliving that moment for years. He was haunted, tormented to use biblical language. And he said, "When you said that it destroyed me." And I didn't think it was a big deal. It was one of those passing comments that shouldn't have been said. And I looked at him and I said, "I'm so sorry." I said, "I didn't know that that was a big deal." He said something that changed my life. He said, "That's not a big deal, but you are." And it dawned on me. The people that are hurt by the most are the people that we tend to love the most. And even if what they said or did was not a big thing. If they were big, then the offense is big, and I asked his forgiveness and we prayed together. If you will forgive, God will anoint you. If you don't forgive, Satan will torment you. Those are the only two options. When you forgive someone, you're not letting them get away with anything but you're letting yourself get away from everything. Your forgiveness is not God's forgiveness, God says, "Vengeance is mine." That's what the Lord says. Forgiveness is where you say, "You know what? "I'm not gonna hold court, I'm gonna pass this on to Jesus. "And I'm gonna let him render a verdict "and make a decision, and in faith I will trust him." It's one thing to trust God with your sin, it's another thing to trust God with the sin of your enemy. But both are an act of faith. Both are an act of faith. Jesus tells a story in Matthew 18, there's a guy who owes a ton of money, it's a debt, and it's

anonymous with sin. Again, Matthew 6, Luke 11, sin and debt are synonymous. Let's say he owes a million bucks, can't pay it off, goes to the debtor, "I can't pay it." The guy's like, "I know you can't pay it. "So I'm just gonna forgive it, I will pay." Guy goes home, tells his wife and kids, "It's a miracle. "Wife, we're not gonna be slaves. "Daughter, you're not gonna be a prostitute. "Son, you're not gonna be a slave either. "He forgave our million dollar debt, we're free." And then another guy owes that guy a thousand bucks, comes up to him, says, "I know I owe a thousand bucks "just give me time and I'll repay it." He says, "I'm not gonna forgive a dime "and I'm not gonna extend any grace." He beat and punish that man because he was forgiven, but not forgiving. Forgiveness was a grace he received, but not a grace that he shared. And then it says that I tell you that he will be tormented day and night by the jailer. Most commentators think that the jailer in Jesus' story in Matthew 18 is Satan. Here's what I'm telling you, some of you are tormented, some of you are haunted and you think if they would just apologize, I could get out of this prison cell of torment. They don't have the key, you do. The key is not their repentance, the key is your forgiveness. And you know that there's something sick in your soul when their pain causes you pleasure, "I'm so glad they finally got exposed, "I'm so glad they came down, I'm so glad. "Finally, they know what it feels like." There's a sickness in your soul. In America now, we call this cancel culture. It's now a demonic spirit that rules our country that we find pleasure in other people's pain. That's a sickness. I don't want you to be tormented. I don't want you to be haunted. I want you to be anointed. I want God's blessing to flow on your life. I want your burdens lifted. I want your hurts healed. I want your future hopeful. I want your past buried but that's gonna require forgiving them. I don't know who it is, my question to you would be this, who is it? What did they do? I'm sorry. I see men cheating on their wives. I see children being sexually assaulted. I see business partners ripping off the one who trusts them. I see parents so consumed by their addiction that they neglect their own children. I see boyfriends laying hands on their girlfriend. I see parents ignoring their children. I see religious people just heaping on condemnation and judgment and burden, making it worse. I see people self-medicating with drugs and alcohol and pornography and anger and violence. I see people who can't sleep. I see people who are so tormented and haunted that they isolate themselves because they're ashamed of who they are and how they feel, and they don't want anyone to know or see them, so they hide. Lord Jesus, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. Lord Jesus, as the band comes up, I thank You for the honor to tell some jokes, teach some theology and verbal process. And Lord, we're sure not perfect, but we thank You that our Father is. And Father, we thank You that You can do perfect work in and through imperfect people. Holy Spirit, we invite You, would you please heal those who are broken. Would you lift the burden for those who are heavy laden. Would you bring the gift of forgiveness for victims to share. Would they forgive the one who harmed them and would they run to the Father who can heal them. Lord God, right now I ask for a sacred moment where the kingdom would come down, where the Holy Spirit would come down. God help these people to forgive, help them to bless, help them to unburden, help them to love, help them to flow in the spirit, help them to invite the kingdom down and not pull Hell up. God, we say that this is a place of grace and God, I thank you for the anointing that's been on our family, I can't explain it. God, to have five kids who love you and serve in ministry and don't rebel. To have a wife who is still at my side and the favorite person I've ever met. To have these wonderful people to be our church

family, to be able to teach the Bible, to be able to have some fun to be able to even get up publicly and make some mistakes and live under grace. God, it's an incredible life. And You're a good God. And so Father, I just pray for Your grace on these dear people, and I thank You for the anointing that is been on my life and our marriage and our family. And I pray that the same anointing on them. And Lord, I pray blessing for them and I pray freedom for them, and I pray Jesus for them, in his good name. Love you. Thank you.

Q&A: What does it mean to pray without ceasing

- The Bible says, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, "Pray without ceasing."

- Mm-hmm.

- What does that, what does that not mean?

- Yeah, well, I mean, we're supposed to sleep too, so.

- So it's not a sin to sleep, go to work, go to the grocery store,

- Eat, yeah.

- Eat.

- It's all important things that Jesus also did as well as pray, mm-hmm.

- So what does it mean to pray without ceasing?

- Yeah, I think it just means that everything that we do needs to be infused by prayer, that we like to think that we're independent humans that do our own thing and that we're pretty good on our own, but the reality is that really nothing is apart from the Holy Spirit, nothing is apart from God's power working in our lives. He gives us grace to do things like go to a job, and be able to afford food, and just simple things that we take for granted. But I think it just means praying thankful prayers, being grateful and always asking him to be involved in decisions, even if they seem little. Sometimes people separate, like they have a hard time praying for things that seem little or unimportant. But you talk about this in the next chapter of the book that, the "Lord's Prayer" says "Give us this day, our daily bread." Well, you need to have, you know, health to work a job and pay for the bread. We're not supposed to steal the bread. And so we have to have certain practical things in order to actually survive, and God wants to help us with that, just like a father. He doesn't want us to just run to him in crisis when everything's falling apart, he wants to help us architect our lives and to set us up to be able to serve him well.

- What about the people who feel like there's certain things that are for God and then there's other things that are not for God, the sacred secular and like pray about the church stuff, the religious stuff, the Holy stuff, but other things I really can't talk to God about those things.

- Yeah, yeah. I think it's easy to make those categories like, well, I don't really want to bother God with this or I feel, you know, sometimes if you feel embarrassed about something or you're not sure what God would say you don't wanna bring him into it but he already knows what we're thinking and he knows what we're going through. And so prayer is not always just to move his mind and make him do something or say something to us but it's to get our hearts aligned with his and a lot of the time that just takes us surrendering and realizing that he's got it under control, whether we want to bother him or burden him or not, that it's, he wants to be there for us.

- So for the parents that are out there, how can they help cultivate in their kids a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit and a kid always kind of borrows their parents' faith until they get their own. But at some point they've gotta get their own.

- Yeah, that's true. And I think you and mom did a really good job of modeling prayer for us. I talked about this last week too that we had a prayer journal as a family, that you talked about today, that was super helpful just for us to see, like, we can be thankful for little things every day. There's always something to be thankful for and to praise God for and the little blessings. And just modeling that, I mean, when there's crisis we pray, when there's not crisis we pray, when we're thankful we pray, when we're having a hard day, we pray. And that's really the basis of, of course, Bible reading is also important, and like you said, they go hand in hand, but not being so dogmatic about just, you know, crossing off a list, reading your Bible for the day, but infusing prayer into that as well and showing that it's a relationship. And I think that's something I had a hard time with when I was little, I like crossing things off lists. I'm the oldest kid so I like to be organized. So I would read through my whole Bible but I didn't really remember anything and I wasn't really taking it in. And so as I got older, I learned to journal as I was reading my Bible and pray as I was reading the Bible and talk about it with you and mom, and you would answer my questions. And sometimes I had really random questions but you were always patient to listen and respond. And so that was really helpful for me just to see that I didn't have to know everything, I didn't have to be perfect but there were steps that you taught me of just how to incorporate actual relationship with God into my Bible reading and prayer time.

- If you didn't have, as a young woman with what you've been through in life, if you didn't have a relationship with God where you could talk to him, give burdens to him, and then also seek counsel from him to direct your steps, what would your life look like today if we just took prayer out of it?

- Oh boy, I don't know if I want to think about that. It'd be pretty terrible. I mean, I like to think that I can accomplish things on my own and be fairly independent and such, but pretty sure I would've gotten myself in some trouble with pride for sure, and taking credit for things, and not

giving God his due glory, and probably, you know, just been kind of angry and mean all the time if I didn't recognize that God was supposed to be the one in charge of my life, that you know, I should steward it. But I'm not in control of everything. And the more that I invite him in the better it is. And I just, yeah, I can't imagine not having prayer and Bible reading be a part of life because as you get older and grow physically, you're supposed to grow spiritually as well. And staying in the same spot as when I was little, yeah, I think everybody would be miserable around me, so.

- Practically for you, what does prayer look like? What is that? People are real practical. They're like, and everybody's, we believe in tools, not rules.

- Yeah, mm-hmm.

- So there's multiple tools and we're not legalistic about the rules, but for you, what does this look like? Prayer, Bible reading, maybe speak a little about journaling,

- Yeah.

- watercoloring.

- Yeah, you've talked about the rule of four, or the power of four is what you call it, where there was a study done that if you read your Bible four times or more a week that there's significant improvements in like mental health, and just overall joy and happiness, and lack of addiction, and lessening of all these sins and things. And so I try to read my Bible every single day. I definitely don't do it every single day but I really try. I make that goal, put it on my calendar, I write it down. I find that if I actually block out time and I have it on my calendar every single day.

- You schedule that like an appointment with God?

- Yep, exactly right, exactly, that it dings on my phone every morning and reminds me to do it. And otherwise you get busy and you forget and something distracts you when you wake up, and if you don't do it right away. I feel like my day gets off to the wrong start if I don't read my Bible and pray right away. So I try to do that every single day, and we have a great YouVersion plan about "Pray Like Jesus" on the Bible app.

- How old were you when you started doing the get up, pray, and read the Bible.

- I was in third grade when I read through Genesis to Revelation for the first time. And my Bible reading time has looked different since then, like sometimes I'll read through the whole Bible, sometimes I'll read through a whole book. Sometimes I just read one verse and kind of sit there for a while. Sometimes I watercolor, you mentioned that. So I'll find a verse that I like, if I read through Psalms, for example, there's a lot of imagery and so I'll get my watercolors, and I'll paint something that is, you know, in there, and it helps me to remember, it helps me to memorize and

memorize a lot. And a lot of the time it's just me and solitude with God. I try to keep it, you know, to a reasonable amount of time so I can get to work and things but sometimes it goes on for a while. And then on like days off, like the Sabbath, that's dedicated time, that's extended time with God, or planning times of silence and solitude. You go up to the mountains. I like going hiking and things. My husband and I going on a lot of prayer walks together. We did that this morning. Just kind of walk around and pray for each other and talk about what God's doing in our lives, talk about what we're thankful for. And we do that every night at dinner too. So yeah, just keeping it part of our daily routine.

- A lot of women that are young are insecure, they lack confidence. How does prayer help build confidence in a young woman to make her stronger?

- I mean, for me, it reminds me that my worth doesn't come from the world, it doesn't come from any exterior circumstances, or what the world says, or what the world standards are. But that what's true in God's word is true no matter what time or place you're in, or what age you are, or what life stage you're in, that it's all of the promises that he has to his children are just timeless and true. And they just are, that's just how they are. They're not gonna change based on our behavior. And it reminds me that we don't have to work for his acceptance, or for his love, that Jesus died on the cross no matter what we do, that we just need to receive that and live a life of repentance and love for him, but that we didn't have to do anything for that. So yeah, it helps keep my mind straight on really why God has me here and what I'm supposed to be doing with my life. And just having clarity about that's what's important and not what everybody else is saying all the time.

- Last one. Why do you think it was so heavy in the room tonight? It's real heavy.

- I don't know.

- You think it's maybe my disposition or is it spiritual?

- It's possible. I don't know. You have an idea? What do you think?

- No, that's why I was asking you?

- I don't know. Maybe people are just very focused. They're just listening. You did a good job.

- Thank you for that sweetie pie I sure love 'ya. I think everyone comes in. Maybe just there are burdens, and fears, and anxieties, and uncertainties and what we don't want prayer to be for you is guilt. We want it to be gladness. We don't want it to be something you have to do. We want to be something you get to do. And I guess what I want you to know, 'cause I love you, all of you, is it's something that you need. Like your soul needs to hear from God and your soul needs to talk to God. And there's not a part of your life that works without God. Okay, maybe you pray for them. We'll have the band sing.

- Okay. Dear Lord, I thank you so much for prayer. I thank you that your son modeled for us what a perfect life of prayer looks like. And I thank you Jesus, for just allowing us to learn from you to be humble and just to learn to be servants as you are, but also to have a relationship with our father that we can approach at any time. Lord, I thank you for this series. I thank you for just how practical it is and how we all know that this is an important topic but sometimes we don't know how to grow in prayer. So I pray that there would be no condemnation on these people that are listening, Lord but that you would just open their eyes of little ways to get into the habit of healthy prayer daily, Lord, and just communicating with you, and that we would all see how important it is and how fruitful it is when we are truly living in relationship in your will, Lord. I pray that, yeah, you would just teach us this week and open up our eyes to see the areas that you want us to grow, Amen.

- Amen.