

What Would Jesus Pray - The Lord's Prayer

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[0 : 00] What a beautiful song.

Am I right? Is that a beautiful song or what? Well, my name is Jono Smith. If I haven't met you before, I'm one of the pastors here.

And as Paul said earlier, we're kicking off a new series tonight, three weeks on prayer, specifically looking at Jesus' prayers or three of Jesus' prayers as recorded in the New Testament.

So we're going to be looking tonight at what's called the Lord's Prayer. That's Matthew 6. Then next week, we're going to be looking at what I think really is the Lord's Prayer. That's John 17. That's the prayer that Jesus prays for his disciples and for us.

That's the third week. We're going to look at the prayer that Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane right before he's arrested and executed. So I'm looking forward to doing this series because I think we can learn a lot about prayer and a lot about Jesus and who God is through looking at these prayers of Jesus as recorded for us in the Bible.

[1 : 14] And I want to define prayer for you before we get into the passage. And I want to define it like this. Prayer is believers talking to God.

Prayer is about talking to God, isn't it? On many levels, it's a very simple thing that we speak to God. See, God speaks to us primarily through his word in the Bible.

God speaks to some people audibly or through prophecy. A new revelation from God might come to someone for a particular purpose or a particular time. But the overwhelming majority of the time, God speaks to us through his word.

And we speak to him in prayer. I want to also say that prayer is Trinitarian. By that I mean that we pray to our Father through the Son by the power of the Holy Spirit.

We pray to our Father, as Jesus is about to teach us, through the Son by the power of the Holy Spirit. See, God is Trinity. God is three persons in one.

[2 : 21] And he's existed in Trinity from a time immemorial, from eternity past. And we learn from the Bible that God has existed in this Trinitarian relationship of love and respect and communication within the Trinity long before we came on the scene.

And we reflect that in some way, being made in the image of God by relating to one another, loving one another, communicating with one another and with God. We reflect it poorly a lot of the time, but we do reflect God's relational nature in that way.

And the story of the Bible tells us that God created our first parents, Adam and Eve, in the garden in perfection. And he was able to, in a sense, speak to them face to face because they had perfect relationship.

But very quickly, Adam and Eve sinned. And the relationship between humanity and God in that moment when they sinned was fractured.

And a chasm was cut between us and God. And so we can't speak to God. We can't understand God. We can't learn anything truly meaningful from the Bible.

[3 : 30] We can't be saved because of the sin that is between us and God. But the lines of communication are broken. And so what God does is take the initiative and he sends his son, Jesus Christ, to the earth.

He lives a perfect life that we could never live. He dies a perfect death on the cross for our sins, takes our sins upon himself, as we just sung about then.

And he rose for our salvation so that when we call on the name of the Lord, when we say, Jesus, you are the son of God, I confess that you are my saviour. When God saves us, he sends his Holy Spirit that dwells among us.

It literally lives in every believer. And it's the Holy Spirit who enables us to be able to pray to God. So prayer is to the Father, by the Son.

That is, Jesus made it possible for us to have a relationship with God. Without him, we couldn't speak to God. And it's by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit enables us to pray to God.

[4 : 37] He also enables us to learn from God's word. He convicts us of sin. We'll talk a bit about that later on as we get to the end of this prayer of Jesus. So as we look into the prayer life of Jesus over the next three weeks, it's going to be really interesting to see how God in human flesh speaks to his Father in heaven.

So I hope you can stick around over the next few weeks. It's going to be pretty interesting, I think. I want to say about prayer too that I define prayer as speaking to God. Prayer is Trinitarian. And I think God wants prayer for us to be not just an occasional prayer or a set prayer, but he wants constant communion between us and him.

Constant communion. What I mean by that is we have a relationship with God. God is our Father. He's our Dad. And so we come regularly to him with our daily cares, with our simple day-by-day stuff. We come to him regularly throughout the day. Short prayers.

We pray long prayers. We bring to him simple things. We bring to him large concerns. We pray set prayers. We pray publicly and in private. Our relationship with God should be defined by communion, by relationship.

[5 : 59] Do you know what I mean? Not just a set quiet time here or a church service there, but constant communion with God. And we're going to unpack what that means over the next few weeks as well.

So before we get into the passage itself, why don't I pray for us now? Pray to our Heavenly Father and ask him to help us by his Spirit to understand what his Son is doing and saying in this passage. Let's pray. Dear Lord, we do need your help so much to understand your Word. We are fallen creatures and know you've saved many of us here.

And know many of us have a great relationship with our Dad in Heaven. We still need your help. So I pray that you would come now and that you'd move powerfully in this place. That your Spirit would move powerfully among us.

That those who aren't Christians would see Jesus and the love that he has for them. That they put their trust in him so that they could be saved. And those of us who are Christians who are worn out and don't have a good relationship with our Father in Heaven.

[7 : 04] Would you please reignite in us a passion for that relationship and a passion for prayer. So move now I pray. In Jesus' name. Amen. Love you to have the Bible open because we're just going to go really slowly through this prayer and particularly looking at the prayer itself.

We're going to take it line by line. So keep that Bible open. If you've got one, don't be ashamed to get up and look for one because there's Bibles here. Do what you need to do to get a Bible. You've got to look firstly at verses 5 to 8.

Just by way of context too. You'll notice in your book, if this is a red letter Bible, the whole page will be read. This is just chapter 6 of Matthew. It's Jesus talking a lot.

We've named it the Sermon on the Mount. It's a great sermon where Jesus instructs the crowds that were following him about how to live a godly life. He rebukes Pharisees and religious people about their empty religion and about how we need to have a genuine relationship with God.

And so it's a great sermon, a great message for us. And right in the middle of it, he instructs his followers on how they should pray. He gives them a model of prayer. But before he does that, he tells them how not to pray.

[8 : 19] So we're going to look at that first. Let's look at verse 5 to 8. Jesus says, And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others.

Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But, whenever you pray, go into your room, shut the door, and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

So the first point here is that Jesus is telling us not to pray in order to be seen by people. Don't pray in order to get those credit points in your church.

Or don't pray so that people think you're a good person or a religious person. You might, if you've ever been in a youth group, or if you've ever been in a youth group like I grew up in, I grew up in a

good youth group, but there was always this one kid when it came time to pray at the end of a Bible study.

For me, it was always this one girl. And I kind of liked her, so, which meant that I didn't like her, if you know what I mean. And, it used to annoy me so much because in the prayer circle, they'd say, alright, we're going to pray, leave it up to you guys, pray as you like.

[9 : 37] And she'd be the first one in, and she would pray for minutes and minutes and minutes, ten minutes, and take everything off the list that you thought you were going to pray about. And by the time it came around to you, you looked like an idiot because you had nothing to pray.

And the thing was too, this is the rub. I'm not, we're not against long prayers or detailed prayers, we're going to see that. But this girl was the most unsaved person outside of that room.

Like she was into some seriously, seriously dodgy stuff. And you know, it came to prayer time in the youth group, she'd be the first one to pray in such a pious and detailed way.

This is what Jesus is talking about here. He says, don't be like the hypocrites. The hypocrites in this time were, in the Greek culture, were actors that would really dramatically act out plays and they would use masks.

Masks for this character, a mask for this character. So that's where we get our use of the word hypocrite because they would be this person here, but they'd be this person here, depending on the mask that they wore.

[10 : 47] And so Jesus says, don't be like those people. Throughout this chapter, throughout this prayer, Jesus is seeking genuine relationship between people and God.

If you're one person in a church service and a completely different person for the rest of the week, if you're one person in the way that you pray and a different person for the rest of the week, Jesus says, you're a hypocrite and he doesn't want you to be like that.

We're not against here too. When he says, don't stand on the street corners, instead, go to your room to pray, he's not saying, don't pray in public at all. We're going to have a chance later on to get up, every one of us, and pray publicly.

Jesus isn't against that because he prays publicly himself. Paul prays publicly. We have biblical public prayers right throughout the Bible. What he's saying is, getting at the heart of the matter, as he often does, says, don't be a hypocrite.

Don't be a hypocrite in the way you pray. See, prayer, according to Jesus, is about relationship. It's about genuine relationship.

[12 : 01] It's not about religious observance. It might be tempting for some of you tonight to come up in our open prayer time and pray a ripping good prayer. But all the while you're thinking, can't wait for the tap on the back.

Don't pray if that's your motivation. Jesus says, those people are hypocrites. Let's move on.

Let's look at verse 7 to 8. It's great how Jesus assumes we'll be praying too. I love that. He says, when you're praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do.

For they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them. For your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. We shouldn't pray in order to somehow manipulate God.

It's Jesus' second point. See, at this time, the Gentiles or the pagans with their many gods would sit around and over and over and over and over and over again.

[13 : 07] Repeat a mantra. God be gracious, God be gracious, God be gracious or God bring rain, God bring rain, God bring rain, and just over and over. And there are religions today where people will do that. You just sit down and bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang.

Or for some religions, it's a certain time each day you've got to get your mat out and bang, bang, bang, bang. Christian God is not like that God. Our Father in Heaven is not like that God.

Praise the Lord, right. I was at a, by the by, I was at a retreat this week and it was a Catholic retreat place and they had a prayer kind of sitting on top of the Bible in my room that we, you know, recommended we should pray.

It was all about, all this, this whole prayer to Mary, asking Mary to pray for me and, you know, Mary Queen of Apostles, you've done this and that, please intercede for me and the point is, our God is an approachable God because of what Jesus did, as I said earlier, we can approach God.

We don't need an intercessor, we don't need Mary, we don't need a certain amount of words, we don't need a certain formula. We can come to God, He's approachable, He's willing to hear our

prayers.

[14:34] So we don't need a mantra, we don't need a set program. God, the Father, will answer our prayer and He'll always answer it, it'll be yes, no, or later.

And it'll be according to His perfect will, just as Jesus says, your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. He often tempted to pray those really informative prayers.

God, I want to pray for Chris, he's the youth minister at Holy Trinity Doncaster, he started back in January. We can pray those prayers, but your Father knows what's going on, your Father knows what you need before you pray.

He wants genuine relationship. I've been in a place, and it's dangerous for me, even now, after a few years, to be in this place.

And it's the place where you heap up empty words to God. And it's not a repeated mantra, but the words are still empty because they are born out of a need to be praised or to be seen to be a good prayer.

[15:43] And I remember when I first got to theological college, and before theological college, I couldn't spell Deuteronomy, to be honest with you, and still struggle. And then about six months in, I thought I was going to be the next J.I.

Packer or something. If you don't know him, don't worry. And so I had all these new words, and all this new verbiage, and theological stuff to say.

And before that time, Renee and I used to have a really good prayer life, just simple prayers. We were going out, so we'd pray together. As soon as I got there, I had all this stuff I wanted to say, and I wanted her to know that I knew all this stuff.

And so I'd pray with her, and I'd just belt out, you know, Lord, we thank you for your substitutionary atonement, and expiation, and your propitiation on the cross. And it broke my heart, because really quickly I found that she wouldn't pray with me anymore.

Man, I feel like crying talking about this. And eventually she said to me, I don't want to pray with you, because I don't have the words to say, or I can't pray because I don't have the right words.

[16:55] And it killed me, because I should have known better. If you get up tonight and you pray and thank God for his death on the cross, his propitiation, his expiation, and you use big words like sanctification and eschatology, we're not going to knock you, because if you're speaking genuinely from the heart, that you thank God for those things.

And that's a great thing, and Jesus approves of that. But if you're up here like I would be, spilling that stuff to get a pat on the back, he says they're empty words.

And if you struggle with this, if you don't want to get up tonight because you're afraid that you'll be too simple, or you don't want to follow the guy who uses those kind of words, I would encourage you to do it anyway, because God looks at the heart.

God looks at the heart. And he loves a simple prayer. And he loves an intense prayer, but he wants it to be from the heart. Jesus says, don't be like that.

Don't be like those guys. Don't be like the religious guys who want to look good, but don't have any relationship. Don't be like the pagans who are just trying to manipulate God by praying a mantra.

[18:15] He says, instead, pray like this, verse 9 to 15. 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 also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one.

Jesus here is giving us a model, not a mantra. A mantra is a pagan prayer that you say over and over again, without thinking.

This is a model for us, for our prayers. Have you ever known someone who got given this prayer in Sunday school, and this is the prayer they've prayed over and over, they pray this prayer and they think they've prayed and that's it.

You put it on a plaque and sell it at Word Bookstore and that's your prayer now. That's not what Jesus had in mind. It's a model.

[19:30] It's got everything in it that we need to pray. We can expand on it. There's nothing wrong with us praying this. We pray this each week in our prayer time at this church. That's a good thing.

But it's not the end of the story. He's just told us, don't be like that. Don't lacquer it, put it up on the wall and pray it every chance you get.

He says, this is a model, this is how you should pray, not what you should pray. So let's go through it, one line at a time. I've divided it up into five lines and we'll just see what we can get out of each one.

Jesus says, our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Let's take those first two words, our Father. You're going to see this right throughout this prayer, there's a sense of the community praying this, a sense of us praying this together, it's always our and us, our Father.

We're praying this together as a community of believers. You can pray it on your own, but there's a sense in which this is a community prayer. Our Father, God is our Father.

[20 : 48] He's our Dad. God is a Dad to us. For me, this absolutely revolutionized the way I pray, to think that God is a Dad.

God is a really hard thing. We struggle a lot with prayer. We feel guilty. As soon as you heard this sermon about prayer, you started feeling guilty because you don't pray enough.

None of us do. But if we understand that God is our Dad, I think that should encourage us to pray regularly. It should just be instinctive for us to pray.

I know this is dangerous because many of you have terrible fathers. Terrible fathers. I was talking to a guy this week who did a bit of research and he said that the average Australian dad spends six minutes a week one-on-one with his children.

Six minutes a week one-on-one time. Makes me angry.

[22 : 07] God isn't a dad like we have our dads. God isn't the kind of dad like many of you had who walked out on the family, who cheated on his wife, who left you for dead, who didn't provide for you as he should have, or just only spent six minutes a week with you.

God isn't a dad in that sense. God is your perfect father. Personally, I had a great dad. I want to honour my dad here. He was there this morning at the eight o'clock service because I was doing my first communion.

He's really committed to us kids. My mum died when we were younger. He raised us by himself.

He's just a great dad. He's a great dad in many ways. I want to parallel how our dad in heaven is a great dad in a similar way to my dad is here.

My dad would be the first one to say that he's a failure. I want you to get the relationship so that we can understand this. First of all, God is approachable. did you know that?

God is approachable. So often we think about God as someone who is sitting up there with a bean counter or something and watching for where we stuff up.

[23 : 29] He's ready to hit us with a big stick. The Bible says, particularly in Hebrews, that because of what Jesus did, we can boldly approach God. God says he is always there to accept our prayers, to accept our worship.

My dad, he had an open door policy. I mean, like, middle of the night, first thing in the morning, any time, he was telling us, come and talk to me, bring me your needs, bring me your cares.

Literally, we would walk in in the middle of the night and he would sit up with us and talk to us. In the same way, God is an approachable God. You can come to him over and over again throughout the day.

Don't ever feel as if you are going to exhaust God. This isn't like the world religions. This isn't like that prayer to Mary. Somehow we need to go through someone else to get to God.

No, God is directly approachable. Also, God is patient. right throughout the Bible, over and over again, tells us that God is patient, slow to anger, abounding in love.

[24 : 46] My dad had three boys. He was a patient, patient man. We tested his patience and over and over again, we would get forgiveness from dad.

Even if it was after a couple of good whacks, we were still there with forgiveness, patience. Far more than that, we have a patient God. Earlier, I talked about Adam and Eve sinning.

If God wasn't patient, he just wiped us out and never created any one of us. He'd still be in perfect relationship with himself. He doesn't need anyone. He was patient and he's continuing to be patient with us.

Particularly, I think we need to know this when it comes to repenting of our sin. Is there one sin that you commit over and over again? And you're ashamed of it. And every time it happens, you just think, I cannot bring this to God.

I cannot repent. The devil tells you, this is it, this is the last time. God's not going to forgive you this time. No, that's not true. Even the sins that we commit over and over again, God wants us to come

to him in prayer and repent.

[26 : 01] God's God also gives guidance. He's a dad who gives guidance. Many of you, your fathers never gave you any guidance.

That's a dad's job, to guide you, particularly when you're young. My dad was always guiding us, always giving us advice, always wanted to know what was going on so that he could show us the right path to go, the godly path to take.

And God's the same. We need to pray regularly, ask for discernment. You're coming up to a big fork in the road, you want to know which path should I take, you pray for discernment.

You read God's word, you draw close to him, and you ask for the Holy Spirit to guide you. That's just a few ways in which God is like a father to us.

He's approachable, he's patient, he gives guidance. So many of us, and this is me, to a T, we come to God with our shopping list, this, this, this, this, this request.

[27 : 10] That's not how we should treat our father. See, there's a closeness in the relationship with your father, but there's also a respect, isn't there? You can't call dad whatever you want to call him, you can't ask dad for a million and one things without telling him that you love him.

God is personal, he's also holy. We have an easy relationship with God, it also needs to be a respectful one.

We needn't pray formally, but we need to pray respectfully. Let's look at the next line of this prayer. Jesus says, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

God has a kingdom. And when Jesus came into the world, he started building this kingdom, the kingdom of God.

And for every person who's converted to Christianity who gets saved by Jesus, the kingdom builds.

And for everything we do in this church, in the community, the kingdom builds.

[28 : 19] And it's our job, in a sense, to spread God's kingdom. out of this place. Doncaster should look more like the kingdom of God because of what we're doing in the community.

And God is taking the world by force, in a sense, to build his kingdom. And when he comes, when he returns, his kingdom will be established in full. That's heaven.

The new heavens and the new earth, the kingdom of God. And it started with Jesus, and he's taking more and more of it as he goes. And so all of our lives here on earth are defined by kingdoms, kingdoms in conflict.

There's the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God. There's the kingdom of the world and the kingdom of God. There's the kingdom of self and the kingdom of God. And our whole life is defined by a struggle between those kingdoms.

Are you living for your own little kingdom, which is your life, your needs, your wants, your goals? Or are you living for the kingdom of God, the big K kingdom? It's a really good book I've got.

[29 : 27] I'd be happy to give it to you or buy one for you. Paul David Tripp. It's called A Quest for More, Living for Something Bigger Than You. And he's got a chapter on this. In fact, the whole book's really about this point.

I want to read a little bit of it for you. He starts in the Garden of Eden where Adam and Eve have sinned. They've believed the lies of Satan instead of the truth of God.

He says, ever since that point, the kingdoms have been in conflict. So listen to this, see if this reigns true. He says, ever since that fateful day in the garden, human life and history has been shaped by kingdoms in conflict.

The little kingdom wars with the big kingdom. The kingdom of this world wars with the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of man wars with the kingdom of God.

This war goes on behind every human intention, decision, thought, word, desire and deed.

Everything everyone ever does is done in pursuit of the success of one of these kingdoms.

[30 : 38] This war is unceasing and inescapable because it is fought on the turf of each of our hearts. created for big kingdom living, sin twists our allegiance and causes us to be all too dedicated to the little kingdoms of our own making.

We get blinded to the transcendent glories of the big kingdom, that's God's kingdom, and actually believe that the little shadow glories of our own little kingdom are as good as it gets.

C.S. Lewis said it this way. He says, we're all like little children playing with mud pies in the slums because we can't imagine what it's meant by having a holiday at the sea.

Little kids in a slum playing with mud pies because we can't see what it would be like to have a holiday at the sea. See, we're so inward focused, we're so focused on our career, our relationships, our money, our toys, our possessions, our needs, that we can't see that there's a bigger war going on, there's a bigger kingdom to be building, and it's an eternal kingdom.

So when you pray this prayer, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. You're praying that God would make you unselfish. It's a dangerous prayer.

[32 : 15] You're going to end up fighting a much bigger battle. But there's a war going on, guys, and we can't see it unless we see it with the eyes of faith. Instead of fighting our own little battles in our own little kingdom, we need to realign our lives so that everything we do is for big kingdom purposes.

That might be getting involved in ministry here at church. Might be getting involved in a ministry outside of this church. Might be realigning your priorities and prospects, who you work for, who you're going out with.

You need to think about this really, really carefully. I'd be happy to talk to you as well about what that might look like in your life after the service, during the week.

Just let me know. Let's go on. Line three. Give us this day our daily bread. bread. Jesus says, God provides everything.

Bread is a simple food. It's really, he's referring to all food or he could be referring really to everything. Bread is the basics. God is provider.

[33 : 32] See, in our little kingdom, we can think, look at this kingdom, it looks big to us. Look what I've done. I've taken this promotion. I've climbed this ladder. Done this degree. I've created for myself and my family this kingdom.

Isn't it awesome? God says, Jesus says, God provides everything. Your daily bread. God is provider.

It recalls for us or it should trigger in our memory back to the days of Israel's wanderings in the wilderness. Remember, they were wandering around for 40 years and the way that God provided food for them was in the form of manna.

Kind of a bread-like substance, I guess. And he provided for them every day. Just enough what they needed for the day. Every day. They would depend on God and he did that so that they would see that God was the provider and not them.

See, if they had got into the promised land, they might have looked back and said, how awesome were we that we organized ourselves for 40 years, even in the wilderness, we survived. God said, no, you're going to have to acknowledge me because I'm the one who provided everything you had.

[34 : 47] And I tell you what, in our society, this is so much harder, isn't it? We have everything. Everything you want, you can get. So we need to acknowledge that everything we have comes from God.

And you know what? It's about praying for our needs, not our greeds. Give us today our daily bread. Depend on God each day for the stuff that you need, not your greeds.

Because he says later on in this chapter, don't heap up for yourselves treasures on earth. Don't stuff your barns full and then build new barns and fill them up. Concentrate on what you need and pray for that.

Let's move on. Line four. Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. You have a debt to pay.

I mentioned this at the start. Every one of us has sinned. So every one of us has a debt to pay. The Bible says that debt is death. You don't owe God a few bucks.

[35 : 55] You don't owe God a few church services. You owe him your life. That means you will die and be separated from God in constant eternal torment in hell forever because of your sin.

That's your debt. Good news is, oh by the way, debt is sort of synonymous here for sin.

That's why you get different translations forgive us our sins, forgive us our debts, forgive us our trespasses. And this is sin of commission and omission. Okay, so it's sins that we do.

We know that we've sinned. That's a sin. The stuff that we should do and we don't do, that's sins of omission. It's them as well. And we do it all the time.

Every one of us sins. The good news is, as I said at the start, that God initiated amends in the relationship. Colossians 2, 13 to 14 says this.

[36 : 57] It says, you, you guys and me, who are dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, your lack of faith, you who are dead in your sins, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses by cancelling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands.

This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. Is that good news? You have a debt to pay and Jesus has paid it.

If you're a Christian, the sins you committed in the past, present and future have been forgiven by Jesus. Done. Away with.

He nailed it to the cross. Then he said, it is finished. Finished. Like forever. And yet it's still good for us as Jesus teaches us to pray each day or to pray regularly, forgive us our debts.

See, when we're saved, our sins are forgiven and we're in relationship with God, but then we sin and we sin and we sin. And it's not as if we get out of relationship with God or that we become unsaved, but it can injure God.

[38 : 21] Our sins injure God. They dent the relationship. And so we need to regularly come before him and say, God, forgive me for my sins. The ones I know about, the ones I don't know about.

We need to come before him in humility and admit that you are wrong, that you're not God, that he is, and that you want that relationship to be made right. It's an acknowledgement, really, of what Jesus has already done in you.

Second part of this is also really important. We love the first part. We don't really like the second part. He says, forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And later on at the end of the passage, he says, for if you forgive others their trespasses, your Father in heaven will also forgive you. Now, quickly, what this is not about is God's kind of capriciously and petulantly dishing out forgiveness to those people who forgive others.

It's not like he's saying, I'm not going to, no forgiveness for you unless you forgive your dad for walking out on you. It's not like that. God's bigger than that. It's more that out of the forgiveness we receive from God should flow forgiveness to our neighbours, the people around us.

[39 : 43] He says, forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. Michael Green put it this way. I think this is good. He says, for if we are to open our hands to receive his gracious pardon, if we are to open our hands and receive salvation, we cannot keep our fists tightly clenched against those who have wronged us.

If you're sitting here and you're holding a deep, deep grudge against someone and you're refusing forgiveness against someone, but you've been saved by God, then I don't think you really understand the magnitude of God's forgiveness for you.

Whatever you're holding against that person is minuscule compared to the debt that Jesus forgave you. So we can't sit there holding on to our anger and our unforgiveness if we've been saved.

Next week we're going to celebrate communion together up here. So I should give you some advanced warning. The prayer book has some good stuff in it apparently. You should check it out.

And it says, it recommends as the Bible does, that we should be in community, that we should be in, I'm trying to think of the word, loving relationship with our brothers and sisters before we come to the table and recognize God's forgiveness of us in communion.

So you've got a week until next Sunday. I urge you to go around to those people who you're holding on grudges to and to forgive them for their injury against you.

[41 : 19] It doesn't mean they have to ask for forgiveness. It doesn't mean that the hurt goes away. But God's forgiveness of you means that you should respond with forgiveness for others.

Let's look at this last line. He says, do not bring us to the time of trial but rescue us from the evil one. What he's saying here is trial, testing, tempting, same words in the original Greek.

So what he's saying is when you come before God to pray, you should ask him to save you from coming into situations where you'll be tempted to sin.

To save you from trials that are so excruciating that you're tempted to give up your faith or whatever. He's saying you should pray each day, particularly if you're one of the lads.

God, please let me not get into a situation on my computer where I can look at pornography. pornography. Please save me from getting an email from someone who I didn't want the email.

[42 : 32] I don't want to open an email where there's dirty pictures. Save me from the time of trial. Save me from that experience.

I don't want to go to the shop and be tempted to spend all of my money on jewellery when I should be giving it to the poor, spending it on the tier catalogue.

Save me from that situation. And then he says, if I do come to that situation, if I am tempted, rescue me from evil or from the evil one.

So save me from that time. I don't want to be tempted. I don't want to sin. And when I come to that time when that email is opened, rescue me from the evil one.

That's a good prayer to pray every day if you're like me. Save me from testing. But if I'm tested, save me from evil.

[43 : 32] I want to end with an exhortation to you to pray against Satan. I guess there are people in this room who don't believe in Satan, don't believe in the devil. I was teaching CRE class the other day when I mentioned Satan.

And like uniform laughter because I thought it was a joke. There are churches where you'll be taught that Satan is kind of a fictional character or it's a metaphor for injustice or whatever.

Satan is not a metaphorical character. He's not a made up character. He's not a cartoon character with a pitchfork. He is the enemy of those who confess Christ.

The Bible says he is a lion who prowls around looking for someone to devour. That's you. And he's strong.

And he knows what he's doing. And he's got demons who do his will. And they're majorly focused on getting you guys to give up your faith, to sin, to stop praying, to stop reading the Bible, not come tonight.

[44 : 43] Right now the Bible says he's working to pluck these words that I'm speaking out of your head so that you won't remember them. And so Jesus says, pray against the evil one.

Rescue us from the evil one. We should be alert but not alarmed. Why should we be alert but not alarmed? We should be alert because the lions are really terrifying.

I went to Africa earlier this year. They're much bigger than they look on those documentaries.

Jesus, man, they're big. Kill you like that. Satan is like that.

We should be not alarmed because we're on the right team. If you love Jesus, you're on the right team. It's not an equal fight. The fight between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan, the fight between Satan and Jesus, it's not an equal fight.

Jesus crushed him on the cross. That Colossians passage says he nailed them to the cross. Then it says he sort of made a public mockery of his enemies in doing that.

[45 : 44] They thought they'd won. He was the one who was triumphing. If you've ever read the book of Revelation, you'll see how this turns out. Jesus wins. I'll just give you the clue. Jesus wins.

He's got a big sword and a big horse and he crushes everyone. He did it on the cross and he'll do it finally when he brings in his kingdom to full effect. So we should be alarmed.

Alert, sorry, we should be alert. We should pray and be alert. We don't need to be alarmed. We need to pray that God would rescue us. Jesus says, or the Bible says, whenever we're in a tempting situation, God will give us a way out.

And so we need to pray that God would rescue us from evil and from the evil one. Just on this, I know talking about Satan and demons can be a bit of a taboo topic. Good word from C.S.

Lewis to finish this off. I think he's a legend. It's in the Screwtape Letters. It was on the book table at the front there this morning. If you can get it, I don't know how it lasted so long.

[46 : 45] This is a great book, the Screwtape Letters. He says in the preface to that book, he says, there are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils.

One is to disbelieve their existence like many people do today. The other is to believe and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. So always talking about the devil.

The devil made me do it. You know, always praying against demons and casting out demons.

Unhealthy interest in them. They are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight.

Just a word of caution there. We need to be praying against Satan. We need to believe that he can take us down and that he's powerful.

But we need to know that we stand on the rock, solid foundation that Jesus laid on the cross. That he's mighty to save when we come to him in prayer.

[47 : 44] So when you pray, don't pray to be seen. Don't pray to be smart. Don't heap up empty phrases. When you come up here to pray in a minute, I really hope you do.

Pray from your heart. God will reward you. When you pray, pray to your dad in heaven. He's a good dad. He's a faithful dad.

He wants to hear our prayers. Acknowledge him that he's holy, that he's in heaven, that he's above us. Pray that he would minimize your selfishness and your preoccupation with your own kingdom.

Pray that his will would be done on this earth. Pray for your daily needs. Not greeds, but daily needs. Your bread. Your daily stuff, the stuff of life that you need.

Pray for forgiveness. Constantly sinning against God. Just pray that he'd renew the relationship.

And take the time to forgive those who've sinned against you in response to the great forgiveness that he's shown you.

[48 : 46] And then, constantly be on your guard against the devil. Pray against Satan. But know that if you trust in Jesus, he's going to win in the end.

When he brings in his kingdom, you'll be ushered into his presence where you will speak to him face to face. In the meantime, let's pray to God. Thank him for his word to us tonight.

Lord, thanks for giving this model of how to pray. I pray that we would use it in our daily prayers to you.

That we'd use it as a model. A model that pleases you. I pray now that as we come to pray as a community of believers, that we would pray to you with integrity and sincerity in a way that reflects our genuine relationship with you.

Please continue to encourage us over the next couple of weeks as we look at the prayers of Jesus. Encourage us to pray. Encourage us to see you as a God who invites and welcomes and loves prayer.

[50 : 08] We pray all this for Jesus' sake. Amen.