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**Turn in your Bibles to Matthew 6.**

Over the last couple of months we’ve been learning to pray. Our teacher has been none other than the Lord Jesus Christ who has given us what we call “The Model Prayer” or the “The Lord’s Prayer.” Sometimes it’s called “The Disciples’ Prayer” and it is a prayer that we’re all familiar with. It’s a skeletal framework a comprehensive masterpiece of all that is necessary and part of true prayer, because it comes from Jesus Himself.

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What have we seen about prayer? Here’s a quick summary of where we’ve been and will finish today:

**The Characteristics of Prayer:**

1. **The Purpose of Prayer-Not just getting stuff, but Communion with God**
  2. **The Worship of Prayer-Realizing God is our Father, our Papa in heaven**
  3. **The Priority of Prayer-It’s not about my kingdom but His kingdom**
  4. **The Provision of Prayer-God, our Father supplies all that we need**
  5. **Forgiveness and Prayer**
  6. **The Protection of Prayer**
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**Matthew 6:9-13**

9 Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. 10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread, 12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

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Church family, as Christians we need protection, particularly in our world today. A world that is more and more dominated by Satan and his schemes and his evil temptations. We live in a culture that continues to slide into an immoral abyss, while Satan laughs in our faces. Jesus said: “**Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.**” And oh is it weak today among many Christians and that’s why Jesus says to cry out to our Father:

**Matthew 6:13**

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

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This morning, I want to tell you that I’m burdened church family. I’m burdened at how Satan is having a field day in our country, in our state, in our communities and in our homes. We live in such a fallen culture and the god of this age is running wild according to his nature.

**1 Peter 5:8-9**

8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.

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Folks, I’m here to tell you this morning, we’ve stopped resisting the Devil, but instead we’ve systematically been embracing his ways and his darkness and he’s eating us alive!

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Let me ask you something this morning: Do you believe Satan exists? Oh he exists! Listen, he's as real as the person sitting beside you. He is the fallen angel Lucifer, who in his pride wanted to be God and God said, "No way!" And God cast him to this earth along with 1/3 of the angels, who refused to submit to God and they became his demonic host. And today, even this morning...we deal with Satan's forces. Why?

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### **Ephesians 6:12**

**12** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

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And because of this reason, we are to pray for deliverance from Satan and his schemes.

### **Matthew 6:13**

**13** And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

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The word Jesus uses there for "EVIL," can also be translated as the "EVIL One." In other words, Jesus is saying: "Pray that you will not fall into his trap." But, church look where we are today! The Church has been decimated in her understanding of Scripture when it comes to so many issues of the day. We'd rather be liked and be politically correct than biblically correct. And where has that gotten us? Listen church family and hear me well, the Church of Jesus Christ has the truth for how mankind is to live and if we don't serve it up to the world, no one else will.

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The Apostle Paul wrote back to Timothy who was trying his best to straighten out the church in Ephesus and Paul wrote these words...

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### **1 Timothy 3:14-15**

**14** I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, **15** if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.

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You see, the church has the truth. Not A truth, but THE truth. And we have to serve it up like a waitress bringing food to a table.



But, will we? Listen, today in America, the Church of Jesus Christ is being faced with one of the greatest temptations of the Evil One since the founding of this nation. We are being faced with the temptation as to whether or not we'll stand on the truth of Jesus Christ as taught in His Word, or chuck to the politically correct, everything goes ditch lines and gutters of culture.

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Jesus knew, as His followers, that we would face many, many difficult times until His return and therefore, He said, "Pray that you'll stand!" And that is the cry of verse 13.

### **Matthew 6:13**

### 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

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Let's look at what Jesus was saying by asking the simple question: "Why would Jesus say that we should pray to God to LEAD us not into TEMPTATION? I didn't think God could tempt a person because He's holy and righteous. And the answer to that question is yes, you are correct. It's impossible for God to entice us to sin. That would go totally against His character and James tells us so...

#### James 1:13-15

13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. 14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

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I want to remind you about the word for temptation. **Turn to Matthew, chapter 4.**

As you are turning there, I want to remind you that the Greek word translated as "temptation" used in Matthew 6:13 can also be translated as "trial." Do you remember us talking about this when we studied Jesus' temptation in Matthew, chapter 4?

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#### Matthew 4:1

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

The Greek word used there is a derivative of the word used in Matthew 6:13 **peirasmos**:

#### **Definition for the Greek Word: peirasmos:**

#1 In a good sense, it is trial or test for the purpose of ascertaining the quality of something (used by God) #2 In a bad sense, it is a temptation or enticement to sin that arises from lustful desires (used by Satan) (source: blueletterbible.org)

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It can be said this way:

God allows **tests** to our faith to grow us

Satan uses **temptations** to our lust to defeat us

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It's much like a see-saw...



It could go either way...it simply depends on the side which you choose to sit.

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You may remember in our teaching the example of the \$20 bill lying in the Wal-Mart parking lot?



You see it fall out of the person's pocket in front of you. Do you keep it or do you give it back? You are on the temptation/trial see-saw. It's a test and a temptation at the same time. And here's the deal, you don't really know which one it is until after it's over. If you do the right thing, then you passed the TEST. However, if you fail...then you succumbed to the TEMPTATION.

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Jesus encourages us to pray for protection. He encourages us to pray that we will not even have to endure the trial.

### **Matthew 6:13**

**13 And lead us not into temptation, [TRIAL], but deliver us from evil.**

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Remember when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane. What did He say?



"Father, let this cup pass from me." Jesus knew He was going to have to die, but He wanted to endure the trial without His Father turning His back on Him. Yet, God had to forsake Him on the cross, because He carried your sin and mine.

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You see, in His humanity, Jesus was saying, **"Lord Father, if you can spare me this trial, do it. But if I have to go through the trial, then deliver me through this evil."** And that's how we are to pray. We need and must pray for the Father's protection.

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Let's bring it down to our level. You sir, are walking along and you pass a certain magazine, a certain book, a certain movie theater, a certain program on your television or something on the internet. It's a test or a temptation. Which will it be? It can be a test to show you your spiritual strength and cause you to grow, or it can be a temptation to incite you and entice you to lust and fall into sin.

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Trials and temptations come our way as a part of this life. We all deal with many things. We deal with lost jobs or angry spouses. Perhaps it's something with you kids or conflicts in a relationship. Maybe you're upset with someone at work, or school or church. Maybe you are facing troubles financially or emotionally and Satan begins to hit you and wants to make you bitter and angry, and so how are you doing to deal with it? Which side of the see-saw will you choose?

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**It's like Abraham and Isaac.**



What a test! What a trial! The Bible says in the Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11:

### **Hebrews 11:17**

**17** By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son.

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You see, you can sum up in one word what Abraham did: SUBMIT. He submitted his will to God's will. You want to pass the test? Overcome the temptation? Then you'll have to: Submit.

### **James 4:7**

**7** Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

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Submit means you give your life over to the Lordship of Jesus. He's the boss! If you do that...then you are passing tests every day...but, if you're calling the shots, then you're falling to the temptations right and left.

You see, as a follower of Christ, if you choose to pass the test, then you submit to the Lordship of Jesus, but if you continue to give into Satan's temptations, he will destroy your witness and leave you miserable and defeated.

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So we cry out to our Father like Abraham did and like Jesus Himself did in submission and we say to God our Father, "Oh Father in heaven, spare me the trial, but if the trial fits your wisdom and the trials fits your will and the trial fits your plan, then protect me through the trial so that I can come out of it just like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego did from the fiery furnace, without even the smell of smoke. Or like Daniel did, when he walked out of the lion's den, without even a scratch.

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You see, there's always a way of escape.

### **1 Corinthians 10:13**

**13** No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

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You see, there's always an escape, (Greek word: Ekbasis). It's this:





An escape hatch... And isn't that amazing...that God always provides a way to safety. He always provides a way for the circumstance to be nothing but a trial instead of a temptation. We just have to choose the escape hatch...the way out!

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Do you know what that means? That means that you are going to be challenged.



And I look at that little girl and I think about our culture and all that our young people are having to deal with right now. Things that most of us over the age of 30 never had to encounter. I was reading last week via Focus on the Family that a young boy was on a recent field trip and his mom said: "My son was harassed by his 'friends'—for buying lunch at Chick-fil-A. He was harshly told that CFA is homophobic and he should not buy from them." "Ironically," the mother said, "the students who harassed him were some of the very same students who had recently made a diversity video about tolerance." She said, "It seems that the anti-bullying crowd has become a crowd of bullies themselves."

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And this is what causes our children and teenagers to doubt. They are so beaten up! And they doubt whether or not they can endure all of this pressure. Pressure that most of us never had to deal with as kids. You see, every group you can imagine is protected in our country today except for Christians. We have almost zero protection and that's why many Christians are wilting.

So many of our young adults and kids are wilting against the tide of popular opinion among their peers...even when they know that the things they are being told to accept and believe are against the Bible...they sheepishly surrender to the opinion of their peers so they won't be ostracized. And the truth is...it's really no different with Christian adults today who bend to their peers' popular opinion. And these tests are coming at us harder and harder and faster and faster! But, this shouldn't surprise us.

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#### **Please turn with me to 1 Peter 4.**

The Apostle Peter said this would happen. (Wed. Night: Apologetics Series.) Peter is writing to Christians who have been dispersed throughout the known world of that day because of the

oppression of persecution by the wicked Roman Emperor, Nero.

### **1 Peter 4:3-6**

**3** For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. **4** With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you; **5** but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. **6** For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does.

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### **1 Peter 4:12-14**

**12** Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. **13** But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. **14** If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

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### **1 Peter 4:17-19**

**17** For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? **18** And "If the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?" **19** Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

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**Church family, we've missed out on a lot of persecution in our generation (for those of us over 30). But, it's now here! And it's coming with vengeance. Are you ready?**

**You see what is considered abhorrent and ungodly in Scripture is now being espoused as right and as good in our culture and because we won't join in with the culture, they are surprised and then they malign us and insult us.**

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**It's happening with full abandon right now regarding this:**



**Every civilization since time began has marked and differentiated its people by male and female anatomically until now. Now in our culture, people are okay with a man, who has the anatomy of a man walking into a women's or girls' bathroom just because he FEELS like a woman.**

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**Jesus said:**

### **Matthew 19:4**

**4** "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female.

**And so, laws are having to be passed today just to promote common sense decency in our public bathrooms** and this has created a furor in this country. Last week, Governor Phil Bryant of Mississippi signed into law a Religious Protection bill that like 20 other states in the United States with similar laws, will stop the government from discriminating against Christians. Take a look at

what the law says according to the Family Research Council website:

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**“Under the new law, as a Christian, the state can't punish, fine, fire, or block you from government work for believing that marriage is to be between one man and one woman. No pastor, church or religious group will be forced to perform a gay ‘wedding.’ No florist, baker, photographer or other professional will be forced to use their business and services that stand in violation of their religious beliefs. Religious schools, universities and social service groups can continue to hire and employ personnel and have housing policies that reflect their beliefs. [In other words, if you are a Christian university, you don't have to provide on-campus housing for same-sex couples.] No one will be punished or imprisoned for refusing to personally issue a marriage license that violates their beliefs. And no men will be able to force their way into intimate facilities reserved for girls and women, such as showers and restrooms, simply by claiming that he ‘identifies’ as a woman.”** (Source: Family Research Council, website.)

But, listen...here comes the persecution and the insults: Hollywood, corporate America and big-time sports leagues like the NFL and the NBA are now boycotting not only Mississippi, but NC because of our Common Sense bill. States such as New York, Vermont and Washington have issued a ban on state employee travel to Mississippi and NC. And even the Obama Administration has said they will award no government contracts to either state and get this... they have even threatened to pull Federal Funding from both states in various capacities if they don't recant these laws.

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I guess you heard that Paypal now...



says they won't build a new facility in Charlotte. I love what Lt. Governor Dan Forest (who is a Christian) said about their decision.

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**“If our action in keeping men out of women's bathrooms and showers protected the life of just one child or one woman from being molested or assaulted, then it was worth it. North Carolina will never put a price tag on the value of our children. They are precious and priceless. If a corporation wanting to do business in North Carolina does not see the worth of our children in the same light, then I wish them well as they do business somewhere else.”** NC Lt. Governor, Dan Forest

Amen Lt. Governor Forest! But here's the thing folks. If you agree with him, then you are going to be demonized and maligned! You are going to be insulted and called a bigot...close-minded...unloving and evil simply for believing and practicing what the Scripture has consistently taught and been accepted as for close to 2,000 years.

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Listen, Christians today are now told we are not loving, accepting and caring because we won't acknowledge as good and acceptable and right what the Bible explicitly calls sin. Yet, the most loving thing that you can do for another human being who is caught in sin **is to help them to see that we are all sinners who have fallen short of the glory of God and stand in need of a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who wants to unshackle us from our sins, not leave us in**



**them.** You see, true love is not acceptance of sin. True love is having the courage to tell someone that they need to be rescued from their sin. Just like you've been rescued and I've been rescued.

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Dr. Al Mohler, President of Southern Seminary says the Church in America is at crossroads. I guess you could call it a see-saw as we pray, LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL. He says this:

**“For centuries the Christian church has been the center of Western civilization, culture, government and law. Our society was based on explicitly Christian principles which grew out of Christian convictions. All of these, we now hasten to add, are under serious attack. The very notion of right and wrong is now discarded by large sectors of American society. The culture has moved swiftly toward a more complete abandonment of all moral conviction. The confessing church must now be willing to be a moral minority, if that is what the times demand. The church has no right to follow the secular siren call toward moral revisionism and politically correct positions on the issues of the day.**

**The church's convictions must come from the authoritative Word of God, which reveals the wisdom of God and His commands. The church is to be a community of character. [But] that character, produced by a people who stand under the authority of the Sovereign God of the universe, will inevitably be at odds with a culture of unbelief. The Christian church now finds itself facing a new reality. The faithful church is, for the most part, tolerated as one voice in the public arena, but only so long as it does not attempt to exercise any credible influence on the state of affairs. Should the church speak forcefully to an issue of public debate, it is castigated as coercive and out of date. The church must awaken to its status as a moral minority and hold fast to the Gospel we have been entrusted to preach. In so doing, the deep springs of permanent truth will reveal the church to be a life-giving oasis amidst America's moral desert.** Dr. Al Mohler, President, Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky

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**Jesus said to pray, Oh Father in heaven...**

### **Matthew 6:13**

**13 lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

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**Church family, as we close...ask yourself... Are we choosing to pass the test or are we falling to the temptations of the Evil One? Are we going to pocket the \$20 or have the courage to give it back? What are we serving up today church?**



**What does the world see in our platters? Do they see the Word of God or political correctness? Are we going to be representatives of the King or cowards cowering in fear? Listen church, if they don't see the truth of the word of God, that can change their lives from us...where will they see it? It's got to be us. But, if it is us and we hold**

up Jesus, we'll be maligned and we will suffer.

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And Jesus knows all about it. Peter said:

**1 Peter 4:1-2**

**1** Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, **2** so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.

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**And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever, Amen!**