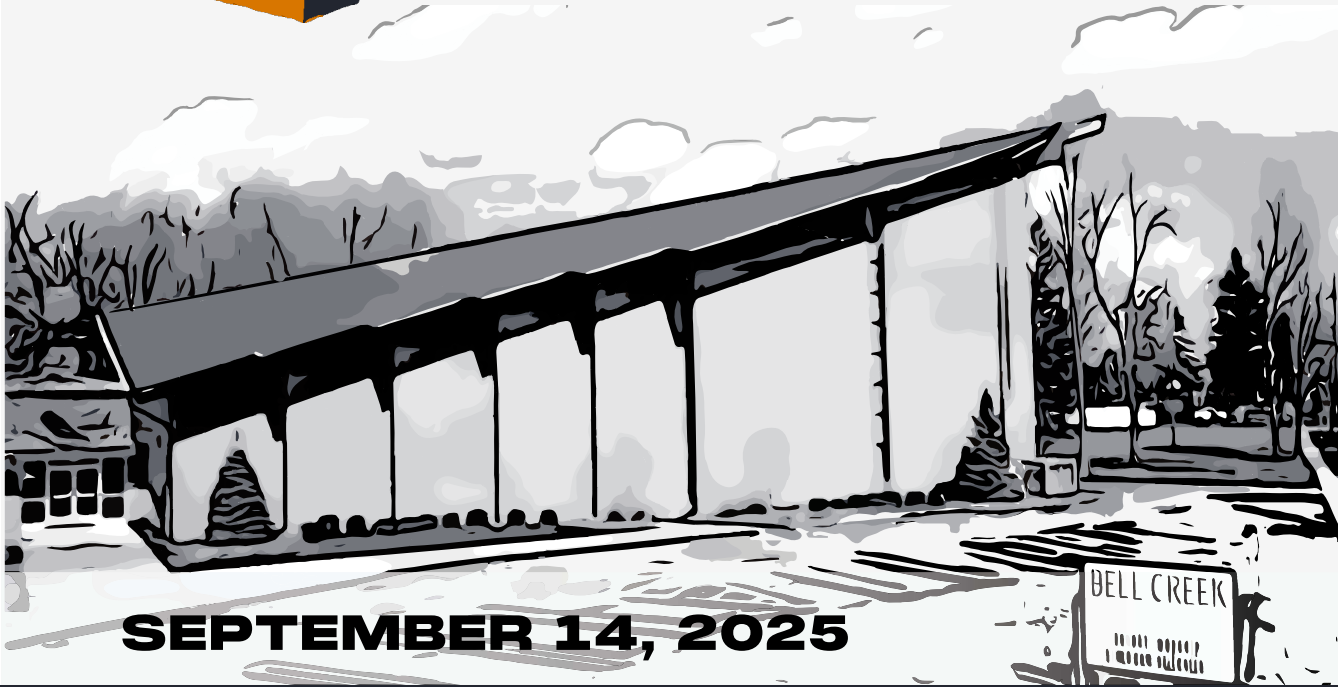


WELCOME TO



BELL CREEK

Community Church



SEPTEMBER 14, 2025

OUR CONFIDENCE IN CHRIST

1 JOHN 5: 13–17

SERMON BY: PASTOR FRED WRIGHT

CURRENT SERMON SERIES: THE SHORT LETTERS

OUR CONFIDENCE IN CHRIST

1 JOHN 5: 13–17

He Hears Us in Whatever We Ask

Prayers of Life

Sin that Leads to Death

FOR NEXT WEEK

For Next Week read the entire book of 1 John one more time! You can do it! It will only take about 15 minutes.

DAILY CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE READING

SEPTEMBER 14: DANIEL 1-3
SEPTEMBER 15: DANIEL 4-6
SEPTEMBER 16: DANIEL 7-9
SEPTEMBER 17: DANIEL 10-12
SEPTEMBER 18: EZRA 1-3
SEPTEMBER 19: EZRA 4-6 & PSALM 37
SEPTEMBER 20: HAGGAI
SEPTEMBER 21: ZECHARIAH 1-7

UPCOMING AT THE CREEK

MEMBERSHIP SEMINAR SEPTEMBER 14, 21 & 28

Do you want to learn more about Bell Creek? Do you consider Bell Creek your church family? Are you interested in becoming a member of Bell Creek? Join us for our three week membership seminar, offered during each service, to learn more about who we are and what we are about! If you plan on attending but cannot make one of the dates, contact dylan@bellcreek.org.

NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY CLASS

Join Pastor Dylan to explore the history literature and theology of each book of the New Testament on Sunday evenings, starting September 21 at 6:00 PM. Started in March, took most of the summer off and continues most Sundays, as we move through all of the New Testament.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Ladies, the Wednesday morning class invites you to join us as we begin a new study in the Gospel of Matthew, beginning on Wednesday, Sept 24. The class runs from 9:30-11:00 AM in the prayer room and is open to all women. We hope you will consider joining us as we spend time digging into God's word together and learning what the Spirit reveals. For more information, please contact Mari at 734-293-6903 or Renee at 313-522-3127.

BAPTISM

Our next Baptism opportunity will be on Sunday, September 28. If you are interested in being baptized as a believer, please contact Pastor Adam (adam@bellcreek.org).

ART OF MARRIAGE CLASS

Mike & Mary King and Alex & Elyse Quint will be leading a 3-day Marriage Class in November. The class will consist of a series of videos, work together as a couple, and group discussions. This is the same series as the class we hosted in May, so if you already did the class, you do not need to repeat it. The class will meet on the following dates: Friday, November 14, 6:30-9:00 PM; Saturday, November 15, 6:30-9:00 PM; Sunday, November 16, 6:30-9:00 PM. To register for the class, you can do so by visiting www.bellcreek.org. If you have any questions or would like more information, please reach out to Pastor Dylan (dylan@bellcreek.org) or Elyse Quint (elyse@bellcreek.org).

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

PRAYER MEETINGS

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:30 PM

FRIDAYS 12 NOON

PRE-TEEN & MIDDLE SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:45 PM

2ND, 3RD & 4TH SUNDAYS

AFTER WORSHIP

AWANA

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:45 PM

SEPTEMBER-MAY

HIGH SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY

SUNDAYS 11:00 AM

**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES
AND EVENTS AT BELLCREEK.ORG**

OUR MISSION

MATTHEW 22:37–40

He said to him, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest commandment. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the law and prophets depend on these two commandments.”

MATTHEW 28:19–20

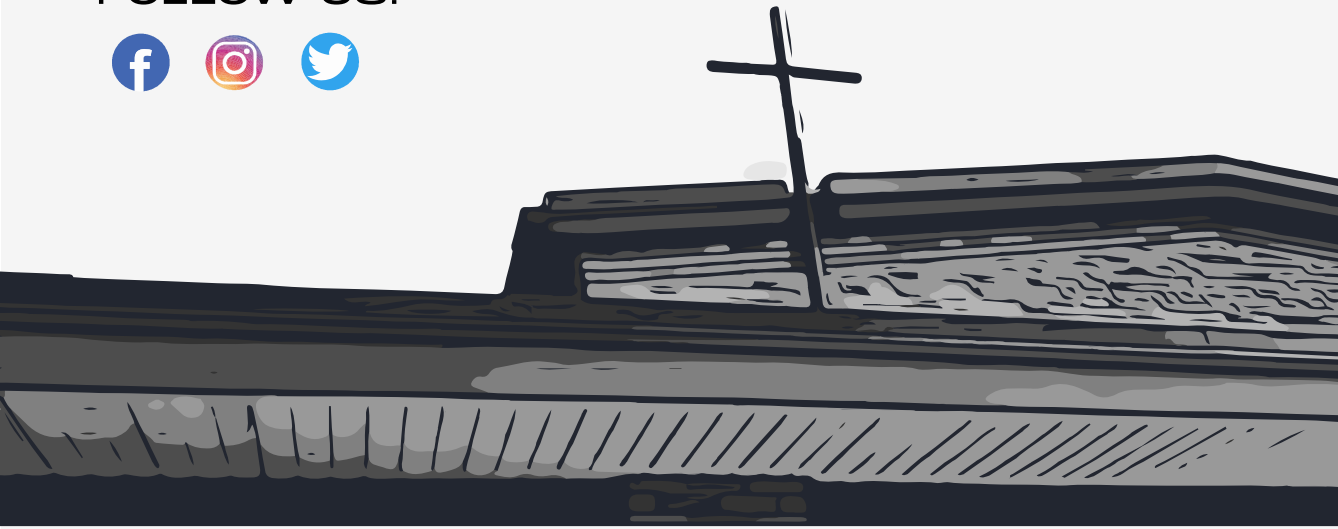
Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember that I am with you always to the end of the age.

STAY CONNECTED

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU HERE!

WWW.BELLCREEK.ORG/CONTACT-US

FOLLOW US!



BELL CREEK
Community Church

30000 FIVE MILE RD.
LIVONIA, MI 48154

Sunday Sermon 09.14.2025

Sermon Title: Our Confidence in Christ

1 John 5:14-17

From last week, the basis of our assurance: “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.” (1 John 5:13, ESV)

He Hears Us in Whatever We Ask

“And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.” (1 John 5:14, ESV)

“And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.” (1 John 5:15, ESV)

John reminds us that the foundation of our confidence is not in ourselves, but in Christ and His finished work. We know that God loves us because He gave His Son, and we know we belong to Him because we believe in the name of the Son of God. That is why John writes: “that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:13). This assurance means we do not come to God as strangers or beggars, but as children who are already loved, accepted, and secure.

So, John assures us and presses us to approach God in prayer with confidence. Our Father hears us, not because of our eloquent words, but because of our union with His Son. When we ask according to His will, we can rest in His promise that He both hears and answers. Our confidence is rooted in His character and covenant faithfulness – He is the God who gave us eternal life, and He will certainly give us what we need for that life.

Since your assurance of eternal life and God’s attentive ear is grounded in Christ’s love for you, how will you let that confidence reshape your prayers this week? How will you move from hesitation to bold trust in your Father’s goodness?

Prayers of Life

“If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life—to those who commit sins that do not lead to death.

What do we do when we see a brother or sister in sin?

The Wrong Response: “Wow, look at him! That’s terrible. I can’t believe what a sinner he is. I’m sure glad I’m not like that.”

The Right Response: “Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner, and I pray for my brother/sister that you would have mercy on them and help them out of this sin so that they will walk in the path of life and be able to give a testimony of your love, grace, and mercy to others.”

We ought to pray for one another, especially when we see each other struggling!

Sin that Leads to Death

There is sin that leads to death; I do not say that one should pray for that." (1 John 5:16, ESV)

"All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death." (1 John 5:17, ESV)

What does 1 John 5:17 mean?

This could be Physical Death (Divine Discipline). Here, "Death" may be the premature physical death of a sinner who is under God's judgment. For Example, Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11) and those in Corinth who died for abusing the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:30). So, prayer would be ineffective because God's disciplinary judgment (death!) is final.

This could mean the "Sin Against the Holy Spirit." Here, "Death" may mean eternal death, the consequence of willful, hardened rejection of Christ and the gospel. The Scriptures indicate there comes a time when a rebellious heart is hardened to the point where God's loving provisions in life, His promises and warnings in His Word, the Gospel, with all His gracious invitations and pleadings, are no longer effective. Therefore, repentance is impossible once the Spirit is finally resisted by a hard heart.

See these Scriptures on sinning against the Holy Spirit:

The context for the following verses in Matthew, Mark, and Luke is that the spiritual leaders of Israel, those who should have been able to recognize that Jesus was the Son of God, attributed His words and miraculous works to the power of Satan. They denied and resisted the Holy Spirit even though they saw the power of God with their own eyes.

Matthew 12:31-32 "Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come."

Mark 3:28-29 "Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin."

Luke 12:10 "And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven."

Also, Hebrews 10:26-27 says, "For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries."

In John 5:16-17 John may have in mind those who denied Jesus was the Christ come in the flesh, did not love God or others, and left the fellowship of the church (1 John 2:18-19; 4:2-3).

So yes, there are times when people have hardened their hearts to the point that God Forbids Prayer for them (!).

In the Case of Samuel and Saul

1 Samuel 15:10–11 “The word of the LORD came to Samuel: ‘I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following me and has not performed my commandments.’ And Samuel was angry, and he cried to the LORD all night.”

1 Samuel 16:1 “The LORD said to Samuel, ‘How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.’”

Saul repeatedly disobeyed God. He offered unlawful sacrifices (1 Sam. 13) and spared Amalek and Agag (1 Sam. 15). God declared His rejection of Saul to be final and told Samuel to stop grieving and move forward with His plan to anoint a new king.

In the Prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel (Spoiler alert: these verses are shocking)

Jeremiah 7:16 “As for you, do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer for them, and do not intercede with me, for I will not hear you.”

Judah was trusting in the temple as though it were a “get out of jail free card” while they continued in theft, murder, adultery, false oaths, and idol worship (Jer. 7:9–11). Their covenant-breaking had reached a point of irreversible judgment.

Jeremiah 11:14 “Therefore do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer on their behalf, for I will not listen when they call to me in the time of their trouble.”

The people had broken God’s covenant and returned to the sins of their ancestors (Jer. 11:10). Their idolatry meant that prayers were futile.

Jeremiah 14:11 “The LORD said to me: ‘Do not pray for the welfare of this people.’”

During famine and drought, Jeremiah pleaded for mercy, but God declared He would not relent because the people loved wandering after false gods (Jer. 14:10).

Ezekiel 14:14 “Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver but their own lives by their righteousness, declares the Lord GOD.”

Ezekiel 14:20 “Even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live, declares the Lord GOD, they would deliver neither son nor daughter. They would deliver but their own lives by their righteousness.”

The elders of Israel had “taken idols into their hearts” (Ezek. 14:3). God stressed that even the greatest intercessors (Noah, Daniel, Job) could not turn away His judgment!

King Josiah and Jerusalem

2 Kings 22:16–17 “Thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I will bring disaster upon this place and upon its inhabitants, all the words of the book that the king of Judah has read. Because they have forsaken

me and have made offerings to other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore my wrath will be kindled against this place, and it will not be quenched.”

2 Kings 22:19–20 “‘Because your heart was penitent, and you humbled yourself before the LORD... I also have heard you, declares the LORD. Therefore, behold, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace, and your eyes shall not see all the disaster that I will bring upon this place.’ And they brought back word to the king.”

Josiah (maybe the best king ever? Even better than David?) repented and sought to lead the nation in reform, but God had already decreed judgment against Judah for generations of idolatry. Josiah’s repentance spared Judah during his lifetime, but it could not reverse God’s judgment on Jerusalem.

On the Other Hand, See These Scriptures Where Prayer Is Commanded or Offered Even for “Hopeless” Cases of Hardened Hearts:

Nineveh Repents and God Hears Them Even Though He Decreed Judgment

“And [the King of Nineveh] issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, “By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish.” When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.” (Jonah 3:7–10, ESV)

Jesus commands us to pray for Our Enemies

Matthew 5:44 “But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”

Luke 6:28 “Bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.”

Jesus Prays for those who Crucified Him

Luke 23:34 “And Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.’ And they cast lots to divide his garments.”

Stephen Prays for Those who are Murdering Him

“You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you.” (Acts 7:51, ESV)

Acts 7:60 “And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them.’ And when he had said this, he fell asleep.”

Paul’s Prayer for the People of Israel Even Though They Hardened their Hearts

Romans 10:1 “Brothers, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.”

So What’s the Answer?

Scripture makes it clear that there are times when God forbids prayer - when a rebellious heart has become so hardened that all of His loving provisions for life (sun, rain, food, shelter, health, clothing), together with the promises and warnings of His Word, the message of the Gospel, and His gracious invitations, are determinedly ignored and despised. When the Spirit is finally resisted in this way, repentance becomes impossible. Such a person has locked the door of their own heart from the inside and cast away the key. What remains for them is judgment - and if nothing changes, that judgment will be eternal. Yet even here, we must remember that God's judgment can serve a redemptive purpose, jolting someone into reality and awakening them to abandon their hardness and turn back to Him through Christ.

At the same time, Scripture also shows us that God commands prayer even for the "worst of sinners." He is able to take a cold, lifeless heart and raise it to new life. He can open blind eyes to see Him as He truly is: the overflowing fountain of love who desires to save through His Son, Jesus. So, withholding prayer for anyone must be seen as a rare and solemn exception, not the rule.

The seriousness of sin and the reality of judgment remind us that resisting the Spirit is no small thing. We ought to take sin seriously and treat it for what it is – deadly poison for our souls.

But God's mercy is vast, and His power to save is unlimited. He can breathe life into dead hearts and open blind eyes. So, our attitude toward others should be one of hopeful prayer rather than despairing silence or judgment. Prayer, talking to God, is one of the key means God uses to bring people to Himself. Therefore, instead of withholding prayer, we should regularly bring even the worst cases before the throne of grace, trusting in God's love, wisdom, mercy, and sovereign timing.

Application!

Who in your life seems furthest from God? Will you commit to pray for them this week, believing that the Lord can soften even the hardest heart?

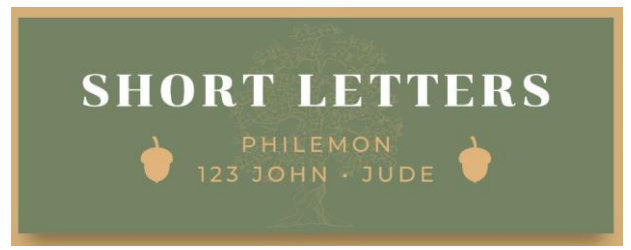
And if you are that person who is far from God, know that His arms are open to you through Jesus Christ, who died for your sins and rose again to give you eternal life. If you turn from your sin and trust in Him, you will be forgiven and welcomed into God's family forever!

Remember, 1 John 5:12 says, "Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life." (1 John 5:12, ESV)

Do you have the Son of God? Do you know Him?

BENEDICTION

"Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen." (Jude 24–25, ESV)



Our Confidence in Christ

1. What did you think of the sermon "Our Confidence in Christ"?

2. John says we can ask anything "according to God's will" and know He hears us. What do you think it means to pray "according to His will"? How can we encourage one another to pray with this kind of confidence?

3. John writes that if God hears us, "we know that we have the requests we asked of him." How do you see this assurance shaping the way you pray? Have you experienced times when God answered prayer in ways that strengthened your faith?

4. John urges us to pray for a brother or sister caught in sin. What are practical ways we can pray for and support someone who is struggling? How do we balance truth and love when addressing sin in another believer's life?

5. "All wrongdoing is sin," yet John speaks of different outcomes of sin. What do you think John means by "sin that does not lead to death"? How should this passage affect the way we view sin in our own lives and in the church community?

