

# Keynotes from Pastor Tim's am Sermon on 10/1/2021

## Mini Series – “Making Disciples -Learning to pray”

### Part Nine - Matthew 6 v 13 “Christ will hold us fast”

All Bible references are from the ESV unless indicated otherwise.

**Luke 22:31-34** “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, <sup>32</sup> but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.” <sup>33</sup> Peter said to him, “Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death.” <sup>34</sup> Jesus said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me.”

**John 21:15-19** When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.” <sup>16</sup> He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.” <sup>17</sup> He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. <sup>18</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.” <sup>19</sup> (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, “Follow me.”

As Christians, we are commanded by our King, the Lord Jesus Christ, to fight against the world the flesh and the devil. In his word, there are many commands to this effect. Two examples are:

- Resist the devil – (with the promise that he will flee from us) (**James 4:7**)
- Do not be overcome with evil but overcome evil with good (**Romans 12:21**)

We are called to be holy people, living our lives in a godly way as Paul describes in **1 Thess 4:3-7** (see over), so:

- We fear God, not man or circumstances such as the Covid pandemic
- We get our directions on how to live from God's word, not the media or TV programmes
- We live lives that honour God and not ourselves

- We model Jesus in speech and conduct, rather than copying the world around us
- We gain victory over sin and temptation on a daily basis

When we look at what it means to live out our Christian faith in that way, many of us feel overwhelmed and weak, knowing that we haven't consistently resisted the devil or overcome evil with good. Be encouraged if you feel weak, for knowing we are weak is a place of strength because it causes us to seek help, just as Jesus commands us to do in the Lord's prayer as we fight against the world, the flesh and the devil. He says: **Pray then like this: Our Father in heaven.....lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil**

We saw that the first part of this petition effectively means praying 'Lord, don't ever lead us into a trial that will present such a temptation that we will not be able to resist it'. What does Jesus mean by the second half of this petition (sometimes translated as deliver us from the evil one) and how does God answer it?

When Jesus speaks about evil, he has in mind evil in all its forms. This is a prayer for deliverance from:

- Satan, as the chief instigator of evil along with all his evil schemes and temptations
- Our own fleshly lusts that wage war against our souls
- The influence of the world around us – many of us spend the majority of our time in the world, watching TV, reading newspapers, browsing online etc rather than digging into the word of God.
- The evil that is done against us by evil people

Jesus is teaching us that evil is not a psychological problem but something that is very real and from which we need to be delivered. We live in a world that is under the influence of Satan and is used by him to tempt us as he seeks to harm us. We are too weak in our own strength to fight against him, our own lusts and the influence of the world.

Therefore we need to pray: Father in heaven .... deliver us from evil. This request teaches us that:

## **we can't avoid all evil but we can be sure of God's deliverance**

What means does God use to deliver us?

### **1. Awareness** – of Satan's schemes and our own weakness

a) Through his word, God reveals the schemes that Satan uses to tempt us so that we can be on our guard. His chief scheme is to lie:

- About God, ourselves and himself
- About scripture and the world around us

We need to keep digging into the truth of God's word so that we can see his lies for what they are.

b) God shows us our weakness so we will depend on him. Sometimes the only way he can do that is to let us be tested, as we saw Peter was in the reading above. Peter thought he was strong, but when he was tested, he discovered that his own strength was not sufficient.

### **2. Strength** – the strength of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of God is given to every believer to empower them to live a godly life. The strength to walk in the Christlike way that is our calling as God's people only comes through his Spirit, as we see from Paul's prayer in

**Ephesians 3:14-17.** <sup>4</sup>For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, <sup>15</sup> from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, <sup>16</sup> that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, <sup>17</sup> so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith

We will never live godly lives without that strength, and we don't have to try.

God answers our prayer for deliverance from evil by strengthening us through his Spirit.

### **3. Intercession** – the intercession of Christ for us

Paul tells us that Jesus intercedes for us, pleading our cause before his Father's throne.

Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us (**Romans 8:34**). How might he intercede for us?

**John 17:15** shows us that one way he prays for his followers is: 'Father, I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one'. When we pray Father in heaven...deliver us from evil, the Lord Jesus Christ is praying the same request with us, for us and through us.

When we pray to be kept from evil, we are joining Jesus in his prayers for us. Jesus prays for us to be kept from the chief source of evil – Satan. In **Luke 22:31-32**(above), Jesus doesn't say to Peter that he stopped Satan, but that he prayed for Peter in this situation. We can be encouraged to see how much our Saviour wants us to have the victory over Satan, our lusts and the world. God is for us in the fight against sin:

- To such an extent that he dies for us to secure our pardon from sin
- To such an extent that he intercedes for us to be kept from evil

**4. Restoration** – of our fellowship with God when we have fallen to evil.

Sadly, we do fall into sin, and then our fellowship with the Lord is spoilt. Evil appears to have ruined everything for us, but we discover that where sin increased, grace abound(s) all the more (**Romans 5:20**).

Jesus knew Peter would fail him, but he prayed that in the failure, Peter's faith wouldn't fail, and it didn't. Peter was

restored to the Lord (unlike Judas). **John 21:15-19** (above) records how Jesus graciously, though painfully, leads

Peter to a place of repentance and confession and then recommissions him for service.

If we are truly repentant and truly trusting in Christ then the evil of sin doesn't have the last word over our lives.

**5. Overruling** – the overruling of our sin for the glory of God and the good of his people

The life of Joseph exemplifies this. He experienced evil at the hands of his brothers but towards the end of his life could say to them: as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive (**Genesis 50:20**). God worked through the evil to bring about good for Joseph

(by humbling him and making him a useful servant), for his brothers and their families and for the Egyptians.

Jesus predicted Peter's restoration in **Luke 22:32** (above). Later, Peter wrote two letters to strengthen his brothers in Christ, and from his own experience was able to warn us that the devil prowls around like a roaring lion (**1 Peter 5:8**).

#### **6. Promotion** – our promotion to glory!

The place where we shall finally and forever be delivered from evil is at home in glory with Christ. Paul wrote (**2 Tim 4:18**): The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom.

One day, Satan will no longer be able to tempt us, our lusts won't get the better of us, and the world will no longer exert its influence over us because we shall be at home with Jesus.

**We do not need to fear death because it will bring us into that place where we will be safe forever.**

**Until then, we can't avoid all evil but we can be sure of God's deliverance**

Why, then, do we still fail when we pray for deliverance? Why do our besetting sins so often get the better of us?

The main reason is that we don't pray the Lord's Prayer in its entirety. We've seen that it begins with worship as we seek **God's name, God's glory, God's kingdom and God's will**. Before we ask for physical needs to be met, for forgiveness of sins and deliverance from evil, Jesus teaches us that we are to pray:

**'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name'**

When we are aware of God because we have been lifting our hearts in worship, we begin to fear God in a right way. Sin loses its appeal, and we are transformed, fully aware that the living God is real in our lives and sees all that we do. The request to 'lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil' flows out of a life that:

- Keeps God central and sees his glory
- Loves, fears and worships God

As we see the infinite beauty of God, sin becomes ugly and unappealing and the natural response is to pray 'lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil'.

**Godliness happens as we behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ through  
worship**

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another **(2 Cor 3:18)**

If you want to see deliverance from evil, then spend time seeing the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, who:

- Resisted the devil through the word of God and comes near to us so that we can resist the devil
- Wasn't delivered from evil but was crucified so that we could be delivered from evil
- Overcame evil with good and enables us to overcome evil with good as we abide in him.

**As you focus on him, you will find Christ leading you out of temptation and delivering  
you from evil.**

**Ultimately it is Christ who holds us fast.**