

December 28, 2025 - Matthew 6:5-15 - "Kingdom Prayer"

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Date: 28 December 2025

Preacher: Jack Trickett

[0 : 00] Will you turn with me in your Bibles to the book of Matthew, chapter 6? We'll be reading verses 5-15. And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners that they may be seen by others.

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

And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words.

Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. Pray then like this. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

[1 : 17] And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

But if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God. Please pray with me. Father, I trust in the work of your Spirit, that when we open this word, it is you who speaks.

Lord, I am aware of my insufficiencies to speak and proclaim this word. Lord, we beg you to come and teach this morning.

That the opinions of myself would fall to the ground in light of your truth. May you change us.

[2 : 36] And may your word have its fullness in us. We thank you. It's in Christ we pray. Amen. Amen. This is a very familiar text to us, I'm sure, to both believers and unbelievers.

We understand and have probably heard this prayer before, at least the rhythm of it. And it's helpful for us to know a little bit about the book in which we find our text this morning.

Because the Gospels are very unique biblical records. All four accounts of the life and ministry of Christ all culminate, of course, in the death and resurrection of Christ.

But they all have very different emphases. But they all have very different emphases. And it has been the topic of debate for centuries that Matthew tells a story this way, but Luke tells it another way.

And Mark kind of has this teaching of Christ earlier on in his ministry, but it's somewhere else in the Gospel of John.

[3 : 48] And how do we reconcile these things? Atheists and skeptics alike love to point out these differences as reasons for the unreliability of the Scriptures.

Of course, we can go the route of talking about how these differences aren't due to a lack of accuracy in the accounts, but rather due to differences in the author's perspectives.

Of course, we know John and Matthew were disciples of Christ. However, John had a more unique and intimate relationship with Christ. We know that though Mark and Luke were not disciples, Mark was a very close companion of Peter.

And Luke, of course, a close companion of the apostle untimely born in Paul. And so, of course, they're going to have very different perspectives in writing.

But aside from that, each author wrote to a different audience. And we tend to read the Bible many times as if the authors were writing to us.

[4 : 53] But there's a saying, and it's helpful to remember, that the Bible was written for us, but it was not written to us. Matthew was writing to a primarily Jewish audience.

And so, his purpose was to show the Jews that Jesus was the one to whom fulfilled every Old Testament prophecy that the prophets were pointing to.

He is the long-awaited Messiah. And the emphasis that comes from that purpose is this. The kingdom of heaven is here.

Now live accordingly. And our text this morning comes from part of the greatest sermon ever preached, the Sermon on the Mount. And this sermon defines Matthew's emphasis by teaching the distinct ways of living that marks the citizens of this kingdom that was now at hand.

In essence, Jesus is preaching a message that says, The kingdom is here. Don't be unprepared for it. Now here's how you enter in. And the way to enter is unlike anything the people of God had believed it to be.

[6 : 11] Our passage comes on the heels of some of the most controversial teachings that Christ ever gave. Turn the other cheek when somebody hits you. If somebody hates you, love them back.

When you give, give in secret. All of these things that fight against our fleshly desires.

Because when somebody hits us, our initial reaction is to hit them back. When we find out somebody hates us, is slandering us, is speaking ill of us, well, we want to hate them back.

And of course, when we give, we want to make sure people know because we want people to know how kind and how generous we are. But Christ confronts these proclivities and says, don't fight back.

Don't hate back. And don't seek praise from men. And when we look at these passages, both before and after our text this morning, the theme becomes very clear.

[7 : 19] Jesus is pointing to things that have kind of been culturally accepted as norms. Specifically for the faith. But these are not what the kingdom of heaven would have.

He's telling his audience, look, you may see these Pharisees, which is the hypocrites, as they're referred to here. You're seeing these religious elites and the way that they're doing things.

And you're assuming that the way they're doing things, because of who they are, is holy and righteous. But it's all wrong. It's not just a little wrong.

It's the complete opposite of what true righteousness and holiness is in the kingdom of heaven. The ones that you think are most prepared to enter into the kingdom, they're completely unprepared.

And this is a serious matter. As we get to the end of the Sermon on the Mount in chapter 7, it contains some of the most sobering warnings in all of Scripture for those who do not adopt this kingdom character.

[8 : 30] Christ tells us that the gate to this kingdom is narrow. And that few will find it. He tells us that there are many people who will speak the name of the Lord, who may do many things in the name of the Lord, and they will stand before him one day and he will tell them, depart from me.

I never knew you. And lastly, he says that the person who does not live in keeping with the words of this sermon, with the words of God in Scripture, will be like a person who built their house on sand.

And when the waves and the floods of judgment come, it will collapse into nothing. Church, are you prepared? There is no greater question to ask ourselves.

He could return at any moment. You know that. He comes at an hour which no one will know. And I think we must appreciate what we have here in this church and in Pastor Brent, because there are many preachers, many pastors, who are mostly concerned about their image when they're behind the pulpit.

They're concerned about being a comedian. They're concerned about making sure people are motivated by their speech. They want the coolest church in town.

[9 : 51] There's congregations who love the comfort of their Christian routine. They love the status quo. They simply want to come in on Sunday morning, 10.30 sharp.

They want to leave at 12 sharp. They love to be entertained more than they love to be convicted. And they desire self-help strategies over death to self.

Listen, the church does not need any more Sunday at the movies sermonette series. It needs to have its heart wrung out. It needs to be told to turn from evil and to repent and to submit and to have one hand on the plow of life and the other hand wiping away tears.

I believe that if things are going to change, we have to start with prayer. The enemy has done a very good job to strip the church of the power of prayer.

And make no mistake about it, prayer is the most powerful ministry that we can engage in. You have heard it before, but it's worth repeating. The disciples never once asked Christ how to preach, though he was the greatest preacher to ever walk the earth.

[11 : 08] They never asked Jesus how to perform the miracles he performed, even though he performed some of the most miraculous things in Scripture. They never even asked him to cast out demons, though he cast out more demons than anybody else in Scripture.

Instead, as Luke tells us in his gospel, they ask him one thing. They ask to teach him them one thing. Teach us how to pray. Why?

Why of all the things that Christ could teach him, do they ask about prayer? Well, it's because they saw how everything Christ did was in accordance to what he prayed and to how he prayed.

They saw his prayers come to life before their eyes, and how everything that he did, he first did in prayer. If we want to see God ignite the church, we must learn how to pray.

And thank God we have instructions from Christ himself. But I want to first say that what I'm not going to do with this text is I'm not going to boil it down into a system.

[12 : 20] I'm not going to give us a methodology on how we can just have better prayers. I won't do it because I don't think that's what Christ is doing. Otherwise, every prayer we read from him in Scriptures would sound exactly like this, but they don't.

This isn't a strategy of prayer. It's a doctrine of prayer. Remember, Christ is preparing people to live in this kingdom of heaven. He's not trying to touch up the way that they're living right now and to just say, Oh, you're doing well, but here's a little bit of help.

He is calling people to completely change their hearts. And so what I hope we see in this text this morning is not simply a greater need for discipline in our prayer life, but that our prayers should require the utmost of our souls.

That is what Christ is calling us to here. I'm not going to beat you over the head like some preachers might do in texts like this and say, Prayer is so easy.

I can't believe we don't pray more. I think if prayer is easy, you're probably not praying because prayer is the most difficult ministry that you can possibly do.

[13 : 38] Prayer is the most draining. It's the most emotionally exhaustive thing that we can engage in. It requires the utmost of your soul.

And it starts with your posture. And we see this in verses 5 and 6. Jesus is pointing out to his audience what they would have likely considered to be the highest and holiest form of prayer, those by the Pharisees.

The Pharisees would make a habit out of timing the daily hour of prayer with when they would be most visible in the public square to be seen, to be revered for their discipline.

Jesus says that they might look very righteous to you. They might look like they're doing things right, but their prayers are absolutely useless.

Instead, Jesus says, Go shut yourself in a room. Pray where no one can see you. He's not condemning public prayer. Just the all-too-common posture that public prayer becomes an opportunity to showcase your piety.

[14 : 53] If that's all you want, Jesus says you'll have your reward in full. You'll get the praises of men. You'll be very well thought of.

Just don't expect your prayers to do anything in this world. You can say all the best things that a Christian can say. You can have all the lingo, all the jargon, but God is less concerned about those words that are coming out of your mouth.

He's more concerned about the heart from which those words are proceeding. It stands as a rule then that if you aren't praying in secret, you have no business praying in public.

If all you ever do in prayer comes amongst a group or before a congregation, your heart is wrong. Your heart is wrong. And the deeper meaning here is that prayer is uniquely intimate with God.

And because He is God and because He is loving and humble and because He bends His ear to a rebellious creature that He made out of dust, it matters that you come to Him without distraction.

[16 : 05] It's hard to be distracted when you shut yourself in a room, is it not? And here's the even more incredible thing. If you're never praying in secret, it's evidence that you don't believe in the power of prayer.

Because why else would you pray alone? Why else? There's nothing to gain from praying in secret except for the fact that the Father sees in secret.

That is the only reason somebody would pray in secret because they truly believe that Christ and that their Lord is hearing their prayer. That is how we come to the Lord in prayer.

Because we know the Father sees. The Pharisees thought that they thought very highly of their prayers because men could see them. Yet here's Jesus and He says that it is the prayer absent of the eyes and ears of men that the Father sees and that the Father rewards.

So this is our posture. That all I want in prayer is to be heard by God. Whether I pray in public, whether I pray in a closet, I just want Him.

[17 : 30] And when you come, have something to say. Our prayer life should have intent behind it.

And Jesus addresses another type of prayer in 7 and 8. The prayers of the Gentiles. These people who would be praying to their false gods and their false religions and they'd babble on in prayer trying to find anything that might stick that their idol would allow them to have or give them.

Because of course, we know idols do not hear. Idols do not have hands. They do not have feet. And so they thought the more they asked, eventually something would happen.

Like the prophets of Baal who were crying out and cutting themselves and dancing and screaming, doing anything they could that the Lord would light this bowl on fire.

And yet, they heard nothing. And there was no answer. We don't pray in hopes that saying the right thing might move the hand of God.

[18 : 44] We don't get to yank on his chain and if we yank on his chain hard enough, he might actually move. We pray because he hears.

We pray because he knows. But how do we deal with the question that inevitably comes up when we read verse 8? Right? Your father knows what you need before you ask him.

Well, if that's the case, why do I pray? Why pray? I think there's three reasons that we could give as to why we still pray despite the fact that God already knows.

The first is really the one that we, is really the only one we need and that's God tells us to pray. God tells us to pray. Amen?

But the second thing, we pray because God moves through prayer. This is, this is amazing. because God has ordained his will with your prayers already in mind.

[19 : 49] It adds so much weight to our prayers because when we have the right posture and when we come with intent in our prayers, do you know what that means? It means that God has divinely appointed that prayer that you're saying.

Because by acting through our prayers, it doesn't make him a genie, right? It doesn't make him a talisman where we can go to him anytime we want something and he'll give it to us.

It brings him glory. It brings him greater glory to work through our prayers than if he were to just act alone. Think about it. If God had acted completely separately from his creation, why would we need to worship?

There would be no need for evangelism. There'd be no need for the gathering of the saints. He would just work and do his will and the world would keep on spinning.

What glory is there to be had in that? But when we cry out, when we plead, and God listens, and he hears, he moves in response to those cries, and people are changed and circumstances are changed and we can trace that back to him because we said that prayer and he gets the glory.

[21 : 13] Third, we pray because prayer shapes us. Prayer is the most humbling act that we can engage in because true prayer relinquishes all control, all arrogance, and it says, God, I cannot change this circumstance.

God, I can't do this thing. I need you, Father. Bible commentator Adam Clark said, prayer is not designed to inform God, but to give man a sight of his misery, to humble his heart, to excite his desire, to inflame his faith, to animate his hope, to raise his soul from earth to heaven and to put him in the mind that there is his father, his country, and his inheritance.

There's no need to teach God in our prayers. Just come. Come with confidence and with intent and with the right posture and pour out your soul to him plainly and unashamedly.

Not for therapy, not to get stuff, but because he hears and he works and he is glorified when we pray.

Jesus then moves on to teach about the content of prayer. Beginning in verse 9. Now this isn't meant to be a script, by the way.

[22 : 48] I don't think there's anything wrong with occasionally reciting this prayer word for word, but it's not meant to be that way. This is a guide more than anything. I don't even believe Jesus is telling his audience that everything in this prayer needs to be in every prayer that you ever say.

But I think that these are marks of our prayer life. That these things must be coming up time and time again as we pray because we should be praying daily, consistently.

verses 9-13 give us six petitions that should make up our prayers. Three are dedicated to God alone.

Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Father, he is transcendent. He is intimate with us. He exists in heaven. He is perfectly holy.

His name is his and his name is his alone. We pray your kingdom come. That's petition two. we want God's rule. We want him to come and to bring his kingdom down here on earth to where righteousness rules and sin has no name.

[23 : 59] Petition three, your will be done. We want what God wants. It is the height of human arrogance to pray for our will over God's will.

We have very little concept of the beauty of God's will. We've kind of lost that. We know God works all things for good.

We should know that what he wants is of course better than our wants. Not even in our wildest dreams could we have anything better than what God has in store for us.

when Christ was in the garden of Gethsemane and he was praying in those hours just before he was arrested. He was crying, praying in agony, grieved, full of sorrow to the point of death he says because he could see in very short time that the cross was coming and that there would be a moment, that terrible moment, where he would bear the sins of man and that the Father would look at him as a transgressor and that he would pour his wrath out on him and he says Lord, Lord let this cup pass from me nevertheless not as I will but you will.

How could he say that? The sinless Christ who from eternity never knew love apart from the Father who never knew a moment without God, he never knew a moment of being tainted or tarnished with sin could foresee a moment where he would lose all of that and he still uttered your will be done.

[25 : 52] He can say that because he knows the will of the Father is far greater than his will, far greater than his comfort. He knew that the outcome of this event would be the single greatest thing to ever happen in the history of the world.

It would be far greater than any righteous deed, far greater than any miracle ever performed because God's will is perfect. And then we come to three petitions that are focused on our level.

But notice these aren't a model to ask for things that you want. But rather Jesus highlights three things that we need. We need provision, we need forgiveness, and we need deliverance.

These also aren't selfish things. They are completely dependent on God. We begin with our dependence on provisions, on him for provisions.

Verse 11, give us this day our daily bread. God. This is probably an area of our prayers that takes up most of our prayers. Asking God for the things that we need.

[27 : 11] But the sense here is about much more than asking for things. This is an admission. It's an admission that we need things in order to live, to be sustained, and that we cannot get the things that we need apart from the God who created all things, and apart from the God to whom all things belong.

What do you have that is yours? Or I could ask it this way, what do you have that can't be taken from you? Nothing. You have nothing.

Your house could be burned up in a matter of minutes. Your car is one malfunction away from never being drivable again. One microscopic bacteria and your health can be taken from you forever.

If not, kill you entirely. The only reason that you can go back to your house today, the only reason you can get in a car and drive somewhere, the only reason you can walk, the only reason you can talk, is because God in His kindness has provided it to you.

you have nothing. And that is why we ask daily, Lord, give us our bread. If you have nothing and you need things, go to the one to whom all things belong.

[28 : 44] You are a beggar. God created all things and to Him all things belong and He knows what you need. so go to Him.

The next petition, forgive us, Lord. Forgive us our debts. Another common prayer, we have a craving for forgiveness, but we often ask for forgiveness in our prayers usually almost like we're talking about mistakes more than transgressions.

You don't really care about sin or you really don't care about forgiveness if you talk about sin as if it's just an accident. But oh, when someone else does you dirty, now that's a sin.

We have no problem calling that out, right? You pray for forgiveness like, like, ah, Lord, I know I lied to my wife today, but, you know, I know I shouldn't have done that.

that's weak. That's not you going before God earnestly. That's you going before God and just saying things that you know should be said.

[30 : 09] When you confess your sins like that as if it was just some kind of mistake, you're just saying that it isn't a big deal. You're saying that you're owed forgiveness if you can just come before God in such a casual way about your sin.

But forgiveness is not owed to us. It's not automatic. But prayer, or sorry, forgiveness is a desperate need.

And we should come to God knowing that it is a desperate need because without forgiveness, we are worthless. That's what scripture tells us. Without forgiveness, we're filthy and cannot be made clean.

don't pray as if you don't have anything to be forgiven of. We have to wring our hearts out before the Lord.

Confess. There is no shortage of wickedness that can be purged from our hearts. There's no shortage of obstacles in our journey to be made into the image of Christ.

[31 : 15] but there's a condition on this petition. It's the only petition that we have that has a condition. We must ask for forgiveness genuinely and of course with anguish in our hearts over our sin, but we must also forgive if we want God to forgive us.

We must be merciful people. We'll come back to that when we get to 14 and 15, but Jesus ends this prayer in verse 13. He says, lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

Now God does not tempt us to sin, but we must remember that Satan is not autonomous. If that's news to you, go and read the first chapter of Job. God is sovereign.

He is all-powerful. He is all-knowing. There is no creature that surprises God with what he does. There is no creature that can perform or do anything that God does not have control over.

Satan can only act as much as God allows him to. And when we pray, deliver us from evil and lead us not into temptation, we're saying two things. One, God protect us from Satan because he's the only one who can.

[32 : 34] And two, we are admitting that apart from God's grace, we cannot resist temptation. temptation. We are powerless against sin because we are sinners.

All of us are capable of unspeakable wickedness, if not for the grace of God. So, Lord, let us not be tempted. Deliver us from the evil one who seeks to put opportunities to sin before us, who plays on our desires.

Again, this must come from humility. we must submit, we must be dependent. This must come from the utmost of our souls. We must acknowledge who we are, that we still have this flesh which longs to sin, and that we are weak to resist it, though the spirit be willing.

This is desperate. Desperate. Like, God, if you don't protect me, I will fail. I've seen my strength.

I've seen what I can do when I try my best not to sin without prayer, without dependence on God. I've seen what life quickly turns into when I'm not trusting in prayer, when I'm trusting in methods, when I'm trusting in systems and self-help hacks.

[34 : 01] you don't need to be strong. You need to be made weak.

Paul says in 1 Corinthians that God uses weak things to shame the strong. sin. We will never have power over sin unless we are weak before the Lord.

Prayer is the ultimate form of weakness. we have to throw ourselves at his feet. Abandon your own strength and your own abilities.

Just say, God, I need you. God, the world is hurting. It needs you. I'm struggling in my finances. I need you. My marriage is falling apart.

Lord, I need you. He hears and he sees. And we know that not because we pray and he answers.

[35 : 09] We know that God hears because he has told us that he hears. And listen, if we just rely on the fact that we pray and God answers as evidence that he hears, we're going to be very disappointed.

Because you may never get to see the answer to your prayer. And it does not mean at all that God has not heard. God has heard. When Israel cried out in Exodus chapter 2, they are enslaved under a Pharaoh who did not know kindness to Egypt or Israel anymore.

And God remembered, or when he hears the cries of his people, we're told that he remembered them. He hears them. He sees them. He knew.

Now to some that may sound strange. I mean, how could God watch me go through what I'm going through and nothing change?

How could he let cancer spread though I've prayed and prayed for it not to? You mean to tell me that God is watching right now as I get scammed and lose all of my money, all of my life savings, and he just watched?

[36 : 26] Listen, we must come to terms with the fact that what God does is always perfect and whatever he allows is part of his perfect will.

Nothing happens that isn't according to his purposes. Nothing at all. If God told us why he is doing the things he does, if he explains to us every time something bad happens, why it happened, we still would not comprehend it.

We would still be lost because his ways are higher, his thoughts are not our thoughts. But we do know this, that he has told us all things work for good.

All things. When Israel cried out in Egypt and God heard, it was still another 40 years before Moses came to free the Israelites.

Moses had to leave Egypt and he had to stay out for 40 years before he came back. Many of those people who prayed for deliverance from the harsh hand of Egypt and slavery died before they ever saw their prayers answered.

[37 : 42] But we are told in Exodus chapter 2 that God heard and God remembered and God saw and knew. God is where he has always been.

You do not need to worry about whether or not he is there, whether or not he is listening. Because the next time you're in despair and you're crying out and it seems as though God is nowhere to be found, remember this, that God was in the same place that he is now when Jesus Christ was nailed to a cross by evil men.

He watched that event unfold, the greatest crime ever to be committed. And he watched it and from it came the greatest purpose in all of history.

He's there. we can trust that he's working all things for good, though we may not see it. Though we may not even see it before we die. He tells us that he hears and he is not a liar.

There's one final mark of prayer that Jesus gave to us and it has to do with our position in prayer. This is verses 14 and 15.

[39 : 12] Now these may feel a bit strange as Christ goes through this prayer and it almost is like he singles out just one part of that prayer. You have to wonder why focus on that?

Well, Matthew Henry, the Bible commentator, he points out that of all these petitions, these would have been very familiar to a Jewish audience, that these would have been common things that they have included in their prayers, except for one aspect of this prayer.

And that is this condition that is attached to forgiveness. that we don't just pray, forgive us our debts, we also have forgiven our debtors.

That would have been new to his audience. And here's the gist of it, that forgiveness is not for our comfort.

Forgiveness, again, is our need. We ask forgiveness because we desperately want to be clean before God, but evidence that our motives are wrong when we ask for forgiveness is that we don't give it to others.

[40 : 19] We don't have the necessary prerequisites for our own pardon if we do not have mercy and if we withhold forgiveness on others. If you're doing that, the posture of your heart is this, that I'm a greater authority than God because sin against me is far worse than sin against God.

That's why I cannot forgive him. Only God can forgive him, I can't. My sins against God nowhere near is bad. That's a wicked thought.

And this point is given a more thorough treatment in chapter 18 of Matthew's gospel with the parable of the unforgiving servant. In that parable, you may be familiar, there's a king and he's settling his debts with his servants and he has this one servant who owed him 10,000 talents.

To put that into perspective, that is 10,000 years worth of salary. In other words, it is a debt that he could never afford.

And the king, this man goes before the king and he is told that he is going to be sold into slavery along with his family because he cannot pay this debt and he begs the king for mercy and the king because he is merciful.

[41 : 36] It doesn't even simply just stop him from going into slavery or say, okay, I won't send you and your family into slavery. He actually forgives the debt entirely. And so now the man owes the king absolutely nothing.

Went from 10,000 years of salary owed to this king to zero. But then the servant goes out and he finds another servant and this servant owed him 10,000 denarii.

Now that's only roughly 100 days worth of salary. 100 days. Microscopic compared to what he owed the king. And when this fellow servant can't pay up, the man chokes him and he throws him into prison and says, you will not come out until you can pay me.

And when the king hears, he summons the servant and he says, you wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt and you can't have mercy on your fellow servant as I had on you.

And he puts him in jail until he can pay the debt. By the way, that means that that man will be in jail for the rest of his life. So will the father do to those who do not forgive their brother from their heart.

[42 : 53] Here is your position in prayer. You are a servant who owed a debt that you could never afford. It was impossible for you to pay it. And God had mercy on you and forgave every last penny by putting that debt on his own son who went to a cross after living a perfect life that you couldn't live.

That's why you have the debt in the first place. And he took on that debt and he went to a cross and he died. God. The temptation is when we come to a passage like this, when we hear that we must forgive others or our petitions and our cries for forgiveness will not come, our initial reaction is to get offended.

But God, you don't know how much he hurt me. But God, you don't know she took everything from me.

He took my child, God. I can't forgive him for that. Listen, we don't forgive to release the offender of their guilt.

We forgive because we know that God sees all things and we trust in his justice that no offense will ever escape. no sin goes without payment.

[44 : 19] But justice is not ours, so why try and exact any form of punishment by withholding forgiveness? We forgive also because we were first forgiven.

God saw all of your sins too. So have mercy because we did not get what we deserve.

And if we knew what we truly deserve, there would be no offense against us that would ever be too great for our forgiveness. But what also forgiveness does, and this is really what I believe Christ is saying, is that forgiveness releases you because forgiveness empties you.

forgiveness empties you of offense. It empties you of hatred, of arrogance. It empties you. It makes you low. It detaches you from everything of this world.

And to pray from a position like that, where you are empty and low and entirely weak, is where the strength of God may be perfected.

[45 : 35] Prayer is not magic. It's not performative. It isn't manipulative. It isn't just another thing to do. Prayer requires the utmost of your soul.

You must have the posture that you are praying to God and to God alone. We pray with intent, believing that He already knows and He will work through our prayers.

We pray with a content that gives honor and glory to God and depends on Him for all greater things in life, eternal things. And we pray from a position of emptiness, not lacking mercy, not holding on to the affairs of this world.

Oh, I pray that everyone in this room today would be moved to go home and to fall on their face thinking of who God is and who they are, desiring His presence, crying out in full assurance that He hears and that He knows and that He forgives.

So bear your soul to Him. Church, I pray that at the beginning of this new year, that the Holy Spirit would ignite this congregation into a flame that could be seen from the depths of space.

[47 : 02] Lord, I pray that it would be said of this church as it was said of Paul and Silas in Thessalonica, that they are searching for them, they're trying to find these men and they say, these men who have turned the world upside down have come here also.

Imagine if Steel Valley Church, if it could be said of us that that's the church that turned the world upside down. But it will never happen if we don't start with our prayers, individually and corporately.

Let's pray. Amen.