

Victory Over Temptation

by William Carrol

This sermon teaches us how to overcome temptation by knowing our true identity as children of God and living a heavenly-minded life.

Duration: 52:48

Scripture: Matthew 6:9

Topics: "Temptation", "Victory In Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of victory in Jesus Christ and how it applies to various aspects of life, such as deception, fear, despair, and temptation. The emphasis is always on Christ's victory in these situations. The speaker then focuses on the prayer 'Do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from evil' and examines its elements that suggest the deck is stacked in favor of Christians to overcome temptation. The sermon encourages believers to not be overwhelmed by the temptations of the world but to overcome them through the power of Christ.

Transcript

Praise the Lord. God bless you, my brothers and sisters. Would you pray with me, please? Hallelujah.

Father, we thank you so much for your presence in our midst. We thank you that you are a God who cares, that you know our every need, you know our every concern, Lord, and that you can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities. What a joy it is to know that when we come to you, oh Jesus, we come to one who understands all of our trials and all of our temptations.

We come to you and we know that you were tempted in every manner, just like us, except without sin, and so that you can serve as a faithful high priest. We come to you, oh God, knowing that we have a man in glory. We thank you for the privilege of worshiping you this afternoon, and we ask that your glory be made manifest clearly to us through your Holy Word, and by your Holy Spirit, in Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. Amen. The Lord bless you, my brothers and sisters.

Would you turn with me in your Bibles, please, to the book of Matthew? The book of Matthew, and we will begin our study in the sixth chapter of the book of Matthew. Matthew 6, beginning at verse 9. This is that portion of Scripture where Jesus begins to teach his disciples how they ought to address God, and in teaching them how they ought to address God, he is also teaching them how they ought to think about

God. And so one of the awesome things about this particular prayer that we know as the Lord's Prayer is that it doesn't simply reveal to us how we ought to pray, but it tells us who we are praying to.

It tells us about his nature. It tells us about his character. It tells us about his designs and about his desires.

What I would like to do this afternoon is take into consideration this prayer, but I want to look at it in the context of victory over temptation. This is the series that we are beginning. I'm doing, as you know, certain series on Friday nights.

Usually they last a month. Sometimes there's a bit of overflow, but for the most part, we're trying to do various series throughout the course of a year. We just finished one series entitled Victory Over Fear, and we are starting this Friday a series entitled Victory Over Temptation.

What I'm going to try to do this afternoon is to give you a brief outline of what we are going to be doing over that time frame. The idea is that in each case of our studies, whether it be victory over deception or victory over fear or victory over despair or victory over temptation or whatever the case might be, what we're doing is we are studying what it means to be victorious in Jesus Christ. The emphasis in these teachings are never fear or temptation or despair.

The emphases are always going to be the victory of Jesus Christ in that particular setting or in that particular context. What does Christ's victory look like in times of temptation? Now, when we look around in our generation, the same way, if we looked around in the generation that Jesus walked in, we would find that it appears initially that the deck is stacked in the behalf of all of those things that seem to come against God and against the people of God. If you look at this prayer that Jesus prays, that he teaches us how to pray in its original context, you're going to find that it comes on the heels of a great temptation, even in Christ's own life, that time where the Holy Spirit leads him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

If you listen to the words in the Sermon on the Mount, because this particular prayer is basically the central idea in the Sermon on the Mount, you're going to find that that sermon is dealing with how we ought to deal with all of those things in this life that seem to run contrary to the nature and to the character of God. And as you go on in the study of this particular prayer, you're going to find that one of the most significant statements that are made there is the statement, lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. This prayer is prayed in the midst of significant times of temptation.

Now, if you look at that word temptation, you realize it can be spoken of in the case of trial and it can be spoken of in the case of what we understand to be temptation. We're going to focus on temptation this time. In essence, what I think of when I think of the idea of temptation is an invitation to a lesser life, an invitation to a self-centered life.

And when we think of a trial on the one side, we can think of that as sometimes being a positive thing where God brings us into a time of testing or a time of trial. And even if it doesn't feel positive at the time, it's God using it so that we might on some level or another draw closer to him. Temptation on the other side is seen as a ploy of the devil.

And its intention is to make us less than what God would have us to be, to live a life that is contrary to that which was afforded us on Calvary's tree, that which was bought for us based upon the sacrifice of God in

Jesus Christ. And so when we talk about temptation today, we're going to be talking about it on the negative side. And we're going to see that not only isn't the deck stacked in the favor of the enemy, but it is stacked greatly in our favor.

As the Bible begins to open this particular prayer, we remind ourselves that Jesus is in the midst of the Sermon on the Mount. And he's talking about how certain people pray, and about why certain people fast, and about why certain people give. And he's saying that there are, even in the good things in life, there are temptations to do good things for the wrong reasons.

Also we look around later on in that particular sermon, or we look at some of the passages then in that sermon, and we're going to find that there are all kinds of temptations. Temptations to hate, temptations to commit adultery, temptations to steal, temptations to forget one's family, one's elder relatives, and things of that nature. Temptations to engage oneself in lives of worry, and anxiety, and all kinds of things.

And right smack in the midst of that, we hear a particular petition. Do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. What I want to do in the next few minutes, is to simply look at the prayer, and to find all of the elements of that prayer that suggest to us that the deck is stacked greatly in our favor, to be able to overcome every kind of temptation that comes to you.

Sometimes we walk from our home to the church, we walk either from the parking lot, or from the train station, or from the bus, or from the cab, or how we walk from our particular place of residence, and we see everything in this society that seems to suggest that the deck is stacked in the favor of the enemy, and that it is the hardest thing in the world for the Christian to get from point A to point B, without coming under not only the influence, but the power of temptation. But what I want to suggest to you tonight in the name of the Holy Spirit, is that not only are we not to be overwhelmed by those things that tempt us in this generation, but that those things that tempt us in this generation ought to be overwhelmed by everything that Christ is to us, and everything that he bought for us on Calvary's tree. If you look at this particular prayer, you recognize Jesus begins by saying, in this manner, therefore pray.

In other words, what he is saying is, as you engage not only this life and its vicissitudes, and its ins and outs, not only as you engage one another, not only as you engage your own heart, not only as you engage the enemy of your soul in everyday existence, but more importantly, as you engage God, as you fix your gaze upon him, this, he says, is how I want you to think about God. This is how I want you to address him, because this is who he is. I want you to see God in this prayer, he says.

And he begins by saying, our Father, in the midst of trial, in the midst of temptation, in the midst of the invitation of the enemy to a lesser life, we must be reminded of who we are. Now, in order for us to know who we are, we have to know who our Father is. The Bible says in the book of John, in the first chapter, that we are a people who were not born of the will of the flesh, or not born of blood, and not born of will of man, but are born of God.

We have a very particular origin, and we become a very particular species of people, because we put our faith in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and receive him as our Lord and as our Savior. As a result of that, we become a different kind of people. A people who are now moving in the way of God.

A people who are moving according to the Spirit of God. A people who are moved by the things that move God. A people who love the things that God loves.

A people whose hearts are given over to the agenda of the Lord. When we remind ourselves that God is our Father, then all of a sudden, as the song says, the things of the earth grow strangely dim. All of a sudden, those things that would ordinarily have attracted us because of who we were, don't attract us anymore.

But what the enemy would have us to do is to forget our supernatural origin. Have us to think that we must fall where Adam fell. Have us to believe that we have only Adam as our Father.

Now certainly Adam was our original father, but God is our father through Jesus Christ. And we no longer live as Adam lived. We no longer believe the lie of the devil when the devil comes to invite us to a lesser life, saying that you ought to be surrounded by your own design and by your own desire.

You see, that was the way our original father thought, and that was the way that we thought when we were children of Adam only. But when we put our faith in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we became a new creation. We became members of the new creation, and Jesus being the last Adam became our father.

And all of a sudden now, we don't live the way Adam lived anymore. We live the way Christ lived, because now Christ is living in us by the Holy Spirit. And so when things come against us to tempt us, we can say that's not who I am anymore.

We're not simply saying, I really wish I wasn't like this. We're not saying, I really wish that I had some defense against this. I really wish that I could clench my fists and grit my teeth and make things better.

When Jesus came, he made us new people. He didn't just forgive us of our sins. He cleansed us so that we were no longer slaves to sin.

That means he doesn't just say to us, it's okay that you committed this thing or that thing, I forgive you. But he made us a different people so that we don't have the desire to commit these things anymore. And we don't have any need to commit these things anymore.

We are no longer bound to sin. And so whenever the temptations try to encroach, we look to Jesus Christ and remind ourselves that we are sons and daughters of the new Adam. That we no longer have to depend upon ourselves.

That we are the sons and daughters of God. And that what God does, that's what we do. How God thinks, that's how we think.

What God desires, that's what we desire. That's what it means to be born again. When we think about what life is.

When we think about what defines us as people. What defines us as things like what our devotions are. What are we devoted to? What are our desires? What are our dreams? What's our destiny? Where are we going? All of those things have been changed in one word, even the word Jesus.

In that one word, in that one name, when we put our hope in him and when we put our trust in him, everything changed. And we walk down the street now and our eyes are fixed upon Jesus. Everything that we look at, we have to look at through the cross of Christ.

And so we see that cross before we see anything else. We see how we were bought with a price and how we are a different kind of people. We are not just different in degree as it were.

And when we say difference in degree, we can say well the difference between being a tree that's this tall and a tree that's that tall. That's just difference in degree. But when we talk about difference in kind, we're talking about something completely other.

So going from being a tree to being a man, that kind of a thing. We are a completely different kind of being. We are not just different in degree when we become saved.

We are not just a little bit different. We don't just kind of want to be different. We have been made different.

We have been made the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ. We are a completely different kind of people. So we said our father.

And I thank God that he said our father. He could have simply said my father or your father, but he said our father. First of all, that bunches us in with him.

Obviously, Jesus has a very unique relationship with the father. But through his sacrifice, he's also drawn us in to a special kind of relationship that he is able to share with us. He has this unique relationship and he has a relationship that he can share with us whereby we can alongside of him call God our father.

But not only can we call God our father alongside of Jesus, but we can call God our father alongside of one another. One of the enemy's ploys is to cause us to believe that when we go through times of temptation, that we are the only one. That whatever you're going through, you're going through it all by yourself.

That nobody else in this room has any struggle. That you're the only one in this church that's going through a difficult time right now. The only person in this church that's tempted by this thing or tempted by that thing.

But thank God when we read this prayer, we begin to see that the odds are stacked in our favor. Not only are we a new creation with a new father, but we are also never alone. We never have to go through our trials alone.

The enemy wants to lie to you and he wants to get you lying to yourself and lying to your neighbor and trying to make yourself feel like everything is all right and there's no trial and there's no temptation. But the truth of the matter is that we all go through something at some point or another. And we're all tempted by one thing or another.

We look at Jesus our savior, that one who is able to say our father along with us and we find him in that wilderness. This was a man who had no sin. This was a man who knew where he stood with his father.

And yet this was a man because he was a man who was tempted of the enemy. And it wasn't like the enemy said, well Jesus you've been saved for such and such amount of years and you've been a member of Times Square Church for such and such amount of time, so I don't think I'm going to tempt you anymore. But he came to him that much harder.

And he came to him and tempted him with things that in his particular case would have seemed like an appropriate level of temptation because it was if you want to glorify God the way you say you do, then why don't you take a shortcut and do it this way. See whatever the situation, the enemy is going to come with some kind of temptation. You and I both know that he has plenty of time on his hands.

So he doesn't really have to worry about this agenda or that agenda or this schedule or that schedule. He can sit at your doorstep and tempt you all day long. So don't be offended when temptations come against you.

That's a part of this life. And don't let him lie to you and say if you were really saved, you wouldn't have to worry about dealing with temptation. If you were really serious about God, temptations would never come your way.

That's a lie from Satan. If temptations came to Jesus, you can bet they're going to come to you and they're going to come to me. But we recognize that we have one another in the same way we can look to Jesus and say yes I have a man in heaven.

Someone who can be touched with the feelings of my infirmities. We can also reach our hands out one hand toward this side of the aisle and the other hand toward that side of the aisle and say I have a brother and I have a sister in this house. Not somebody that I have to hide myself from.

Somebody that I have to look wholly to. Somebody that I have to portray myself as impervious to difficulty. But somebody that I can go to and using a certain amount of discretion you realize you know the busy bodies in the house you don't want to go to them but every now and again you might go to somebody and say you know I just need you to pray for me.

Sometimes you don't even have to go into any kind of detail. I just need you to pray for me. I'm going through a time of struggle right now.

I'm going through a time of temptation right now. The enemy is inviting me to a lesser life. You know God has been inviting me to add another hour of prayer to my week and the enemy has been inviting me to check out this this new situation comedy that's going to take up this much more of my time and so on and so forth.

The enemy is inviting me to a lesser life but God is calling me to something greater and I wish you would pray with me. That kind of a thing. Our father.

Our father who art in heaven. In other words we have a God who is far above the things of this earth and the Bible says that we likewise are seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. There is a way to both be as Christ himself is and as God is to be both transcendent and to be eminent.

In other words to be above it all without having had this mindset that says I don't have any place in this world or any responsibility in this world or any calling in this world. There's a way for us to be deeply involved in what's going on in our society and yet not be engulfed by the society but to be able to somehow be above those things that are pertinent to this society that are contrary to the way of the Lord. So what we have here is this invitation to be heavenly minded and earthly good.

Every now and again you'll hear somebody say well this person is so heavenly minded that they're no earthly good but I'm convinced after doing this kind of thing for a little bit of time that unless you're heavenly minded you can be no earthly good. Hallelujah because the earth will engulf you and we walk through this world with our eyes on the needs of our society and our hands reaching out to those who are in need as we heard this afternoon and yet we still walk by the grace of God in heavenly places with Christ Jesus so that the things of the world seem strangely dim.

They just don't appeal to us because we walk in heavenly light and when you walk in the heavens when you walk along even on this side of eternity how much more on that side but even on this side of eternity when you walk along those streets of gold which speaks of walking in that path of purity and you walk beside that glassy sea which speaks of the brazen altar and being washed in the blood of the lamb when you walk in the way of the Lord in this society and you know where you stand then the things of the earth grow strangely grim and all of a sudden you remind yourself I don't have to do that because I am not a citizen of this society and I don't have to be that way because that's not my heritage that's not my home I live this way God always had a people who were a pilgrim people who

moved according to the will of the Lord according to the way of the Lord right through the midst of this society but they gave glory to God every step of the way because they always had an upward look and they always concerned themselves with a city whose builder and maker was God and no matter what the circumstances of the day held before them they chose to seek God with all of their heart and with all of their might and as a result they were able to reach out into their community they were able to make a difference in their world they were able to be sold and they were able to be light because they were a city set up on a hill they were people that were lifted up in the sight of God they were people that were humbled in the sight of the Lord so that they could be in a position to reach

the most lowly person but at the same time the Bible says if you humble yourself before the Lord then he will lift you up they were able to walk above the circumstances able to walk above the situation able to walk in victory no matter what the trial no matter what the situation because as I said the deck is stacked in their favor they have a father who never ever fails them they have a church that they can look to and people of God that they can depend upon they were heavenly minded that means that they could at any time lift up their eyes and behold the glory of God as the psalmist said I will lift up mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help they can always lift up their eyes and remind themselves of their citizenship remind themselves of who they were our father who art in

heaven hallowed be thy name another one of those things that are in our favor in the midst of trial and tribulation is the reality that we serve a holy God and as surely as the Bible says that the goodness of God leads one to repentance it also says that the fear of the Lord causes one to turn from sin and sometimes we need to hear the loving voice of our tender father saying you don't want to go there you want to come here and every now and again we need to hear that voice of that one who is hallowed that one who is holy saying don't do that saying I am your father and I have the right to speak into your life and I have the right to chasten where I think it's going to be helpful and whether he chastens through this voice or through that voice he has the right to speak into your life and

say this is not right and if you want to walk with God and if you want to serve the Lord and if you want to be a witness in the society and if you want to be a clear voice in this time then you must do what's right and it's a wonderful thing to know that the God that we serve is a holy God and to know that the God that we serve hallows his name even in our own heart the Bible says sanctify the Lord in your heart remind yourself whenever the times of temptation comes that there is a holy God who has invested his name in you that's what the scripture says hallowed be thy name somehow or another God has chosen to intertwine his name in the bundle of love with our own so that how we live and what we do reflects who he is to this society whether we reflect him honestly or whether we reflect

him dishonestly people are going to look at us to see what God is like they're going to look at us and they're going to see what is his name that's basically what they're going to ask the same way when Moses

was coming down to say thus saith the Lord let my people go as we heard preached so eloquently this morning the people are going to look back at Moses and they're going to ask a very simple question what is his name whether it be the people that are being freed or the people that hold them in bondage Pharaoh said who is the Lord that I should worship him and the people of Israel said what is his name hallowed be thy name when we walk in godliness and holiness not by our own strength because we're praying to him hallow your name in my heart we're not saying what you sit back and I'm

going to hallow your name in my heart no we say hallow your name in my own heart as pastor Carter said this morning where we go to the Lord and we by way of imperative in other words we by way of of just literally with a broken hearted demand saying God I need you to glorify your name that's what Jesus is teaching us to pray like in this particular text he's teaching us to pray in imperative God you must do this you must do this because if you don't do this then I am somehow or another going to bring shame to your name in this generation and you chose to bind your name up with mine somehow you chose to make it so that when I speak this thing on that thing somebody's going to ask me what is he like what is his character like and if I begin to open the Bible and say well

let me show you in passage this and passage that what he's like they're going to say no that's not what I'm asking you they're going to say I appreciate the fact that you believe the Bible is true but right now I don't I need to know that there's some truth in you as pastor Carter always reminds us sometimes we're the only Bible somebody's going to read and they look to us and if we live this thing out according to the grace of God they might become interested in what these pages say hallowed be thy name thy kingdom come in other words your rule and your reign your sovereignty begin to manifest himself in my life oftentimes temptation comes on the heels of apparent chaos where there is the temptation to run and to hide and to flee because things just seem to be out of control but now we

hear a prayer that says let your kingdom come your rule your reign your government the Bible says that the government will be upon his shoulders and he will be called among other things the prince of peace and when we allow the reign of God to have his rule in our life when we allow the kingdom of God to come into our particular situation then there is with that a peace that passes understanding and with that peace there is a defense against the temptation that has as its stronghold chaos that says don't you want to get some peace don't you want to get some ease don't you want to get away from the difficulty don't you want to get away from the strife don't you want to get away from all that why don't i just bring you to this place where you're just kind of serving the Lord and no again

that's an invitation to a lesser life but when i pray God if you don't bring your peace into my life i'm going under for the third time i need you to come and bring your peace well God comes with that peace because he told us to pray that way so we're not twisting his arm and making him do something he doesn't want to do he simply wants us to acknowledge how much we need him God let your kingdom come and when we pray that way his peace comes a peace that passes understanding a godly peace and then he says your will be done on earth as it is in heaven and so again another thing that's stacked in our favor is this idea that above all we want to see God's will in this generation we want to see what a world looks like when God's will is preeminent we want to see what does a world look like

when God's people are truly seeking his face and truly allowing him to hallow his name in them and to manifest his character through them what does a world like that look like thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven it's not enough for Jesus and he's making it clear that for him it's not enough for us to wait till we get to the other side to see God's will done to wait till we get to the other side to see his kingdom come he

said no pray this way thy kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven and so when the temptation comes to us there is something that's stacked in our favor and it's an invitation to the greater life as God saying to us yes i know the enemy is trying to invite you to a lesser life but i am going to put this thing in front of you as incentive what

would it be like if today God was given freedom to be glorified in your life ain't you just a little bit curious what would it be like if God could use you in the miraculous today what if it would be like well if God could use you to share this word today what would it be like it is as we heard today somebody could just put their head on your shoulder and weep what would it be like if somebody could just come to the church and even if they're going through a time of struggle you you can just grab their hand and and just hold on to them and say God bless you so much God love you so much without looking at them as scant or askew saying i hope you ain't one of those kind of christians that's gonna betray me if i try to love you what would it be like if we just chose one day one day if we

just chose to love all day long even at the cost of our own life if you will as we heard life defined this morning our own sense of self our own sense of perseverance and our own sense of self-protection and what if we just said you know God i'm gonna love somebody today because i want to see your will done you you want to know what the will of the Lord is sometimes people will say over and oh i just want to find out what God's will is i want to find out what God's will is and they're holding their Bible and they're reading people are dying all around them but they just want to find out what God's will is you know you see them 20 years later you know and they got cobwebs from their arms to their Bible you know what i'm saying trying to figure out what God's will is and all they had to

do was love somebody that's what he said love the Lord your God with all your heart soul mind and strength love your neighbor as yourself and all this is wrapped up in that hallelujah hallelujah so i'm going to speak prophetically to you for one for one moment you want to know what God's will is for your life love somebody love somebody and take that seriously wake up one morning it's the hardest thing in the world you're ever going to do you know something i think like if you think well i'm going to wake up this morning and i'm going to do 20 push-ups and i'm going to you know get a half hour in the church but i think sometimes that's hard but when you say you know what i'm going to do i'm going to wake up and from the time i wake up to the time i go to sleep i am going to actively find

ways to love people sometimes that's the hardest thing in the world to do so we got to pray God your kingdom come your will be done on earth as it is in heaven because i cannot do this myself and so the prayer goes on give us this day our daily bread so say i'm just going to ask for one day i'm not going to say let me do this for the rest of my life today sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof Jesus said there's enough going on today you don't have to worry about tomorrow today God give me the grace to love somebody because i need it from you give us this day our daily bread in other words maybe he's spraying you know some of this effect give me the spirit today that i'm going to need to take the bread that you've given me and to give it to the poor as pastor carter said this morning

we just knock on that door knock on this door i need bread today because i cannot survive i don't have anything to eat and i can't feed anybody who's coming to me you and i can say that on the spiritual level sometimes we can say that even on the monetary level God wants to provide for us on every level he wants to feed us physically he wants to help us spiritually psychologically relationally every day see what the devil wants to say is you have to provide your own bread that's one of the major elements of temptation you have to provide your own bread God is not moving quick enough God is not providing for

you you better provide for yourself or God is not providing for you so you not only have to provide for yourself but you have to provide for everybody else of yourself so many

people have fallen into that including ministers and sometimes preaching from the top of their head as opposed to from the bottom of God's heart and what i hear God saying to us is if you want to overcome temptation if you want victory then you have to realize that God's timing is best and what God provides and how he provides is best his wisdom is best so he might provide on one day manner that comes down from heaven but he's also going to provide stipulation here's how i want you to deal with it i don't want you to hoard it because if you hoard that means somebody else goes hungry that's just the way it is remind yourself of that especially as a christian the more you have the more responsibility you have to feed other people because if you have a lot that means somebody else has a

little and that's not necessarily injustice it might mean that God is able to trust you to meet out your bread to the poor but the truth of the matter is the more you have the more responsibility you have the bible says unto him who much is given much will be required so when we say give us this day our daily bread God knows how to provide for each person what they need he's not asking for us to hoard stuff to ourself but if we have a little extra it's so that we might be able to give out to the needy he says give us this day our daily bread the devil wants to say to you if as in the case of of samson rather samuel he speaks to Saul and he says in such and such amount of days i'm going to come back to you and i'm going to do this thing and do that thing at the end of a certain

amount of time Saul became impatient God is just not moving fast enough for me he hasn't brought me you know my husband he hasn't brought me my wife he hasn't given me that job he hasn't given me that house he hasn't provided for me this or that thing so that means i have to do it myself but when we pray God give us this day our daily bread then we have a defense against temptation you see as we look at this prayer how the cards are stacked in our favor all of these things are provided for us give us this day our daily bread forgive us our debts there are various kinds of temptations sometimes when we think about temptation we usually think about temptations toward things that are appealing or things that are appealing but there are other temptations toward things that are very very ugly

things that we really don't want to be tempted toward one of the strengths of temptation is that oftentimes we're tempted toward things that we like things that appeal to our flesh but there are other temptations that don't appeal to us and yet we're still drawn in that direction for instance the temptation toward condemnation the temptation to always doubt the fact that God loves you or that God cares for you the devil wants to always get us to believe that our relationship with God is in perpetual jeopardy that we're always on the precipice always on the brink of being kicked out of the body but now we hear this passage forgive us our debts if the devil can get you or me to believe that God is perpetually angry at us then he will begin to cause us to believe all those other things

because he's angry at you he'll say for instance he's not going to provide for you or because he's angry at you you don't have a church body that you can address in your time of need or because he's angry at you then he's like the father that you're used to you know the one that used to yell at you and the one that used to beat you and the one that used to tell you unless you do this i'm not gonna love you because he's angry at you he is going to bring you into this thing or that thing but now we see our father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name thy kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts we're a forgiving people and if we can hold on to that if we can believe that then all of the other temptations of the

enemy fall by the wayside if we know that we are in right relationship with God that he is going to be alongside us even through the times of the most difficult trials the bible said Jesus was tempted in every manner like us except without sin and therefore he is able to serve as a faithful high priest and is able to be touched with the very feelings of our infirmities the enemy wants us to believe that God is mad at us and as a result you can't expect him to fulfill any of these prayers that we've been taught by him to pray but now we understand that God is not mad at the bible asks a rhetorical question and the question is this who is going to bring an accusation against you and then it gives a somewhat incredulous response that is it Jesus who died so that you would never have to be

condemned are you expecting that the one who died for you to be perpetually condemning you that the writer Paul is he seems incredulous as he's as he's writing it on the page he's saying certainly we cannot believe after what Jesus did for us that he's angry at us and that he wants to condemn us and even as we heard this morning when then as we're hearing now we're being told constantly God give me all that you are give me all that you are because i can't do anything without you and he simply points the calvary street and maybe reminds us of that song he gave his life what more could he give oh how he loves you oh how he loves me oh how he loves you and me there is nothing that he holds back from us when the enemy came at that time to tempt Adam and Eve in the beginning it was God is

holding back on you the question could have been well why is he holding back on me well because he's got some issues you see he's got some issues against you he doesn't want you to be like him he doesn't and the enemy's running that same lie all the way up to this day God's got some issues against you he's got some problems with you but now we know that we are a forgiven people and one of the ways we know that we're forgiven people is we are a forgiving people God gives us the capacity to forgive when he forgives us he doesn't say you forgive first and then i'll forgive you but he says one of the signs that you have been forgiven is that you are a forgiving person you see because when he forgave us he also gave us the grace to forgive how do we know that because in forgiving us he indwelt

us by his holy spirit and it's that holy spirit who forgave us who also forgives through us so he says forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors how do i know all these things are stacked in my favor because the holy spirit who is in me reminds me of it every day as he prays in me and through me bible says we don't know how to pray on our own so the holy spirit prays through us jesus told us how to pray and the holy spirit causes us to be able to pray that way but what if i choose not to forget that means when the holy spirit is trying to tell me to love i'm saying no thank you very much but now i'm in a bad place because he can't talk to me the way he wants to and he can't convince me that all of these truths are stacked in my favor and so the enemy comes with a lie no no the world

is stacked in your favor you'd be lucky if you make it through this day without committing 17 sins no that's a lie everything is stacked in your favor everything everything everything everything is stacked in your favor god of heaven and earth is for you he is with you he is in you that's why it says yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever everything is yours the earth is the lord's in the fullness thereof the world and all they that dwell therein irrespective of what we might hear in our favorite newscasts the bottom line is still this god is sovereign over the heavens and the earth he still owns the cattle on a thousand hills he still causes this thing to pan out according to his wisdom and according to his glory which is why we end that prayer with an emphatic amen so

be it it is true because god said so hallelujah hallelujah hallelujah it's all stacked in our favor for the glory of god in jesus name amen let's stand together god is glorious in the midst the lord is here in this room this

afternoon to speak to us very simple altar call the devil has convinced you on some level or another that the deck is stacked against you that with all the temptations in life all the things you have to see and all the things you have to hear you would be lucky if you just made it into heaven by the skin of your teeth tonight or this afternoon you simply need to hear from god's mouth that heaven and earth are moved in your favor that all of these things and many many more that we can discuss and that we do discuss in the various services that we have throughout the

course of a day like this all of these truths are in your favor you have the power of god behind you and all of his glory and all of his praise thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever today you simply need to be reminded that's what jesus said i want you to pray this way you're going to come to this altar specifically for this to pray this way to remind yourself by the power of the holy spirit that you're not as we heard this morning so wonderfully wonderfully preaching you're not just going to get by you are more than conqueror and you are going to glorify god in this generation you're going to see his name praise if god is speaking to you and you just need to pray this prayer you just need to be reminded that far from the deck being stacked against you everything in the

power of god and in the love of god and in the mercy of god and the grace of god is poured out towards you so that you can give god glory in this generation you want to come and pray this prayer my brothers and my sisters meet me here at this altar in the name of the lord jesus christ hallelujah hallelujah as we were singing and praying i just heard the voice of the lord very very clear very simple he said that he has a commission for us as a body for a commission for you as an individual very simply love somebody love somebody and i think that for you that somebody is clear it's somebody that is asking you to love that you haven't been ready or willing to love it's somebody if you look into your mind's eye you'll see that person because he'll make you see that person and that doesn't

mean that you're going to buddy up with that person it might not be possible it might be but he's asking you to love them because one of the greatest strongholds of temptation is unforgiveness because that temptation that comes with unforgiveness the temptation to hate the temptation to refuse to forgive is probably the strongest of the temptations because it's so contrary to the heart and to the mind of christ and it opens the floodgate to all kinds of other temptations is there somebody that you're supposed to forgive somebody god is asking you to love even now i'm not asking you when you leave here go and love that person i'm asking you to love them now in your heart would you love them god i don't have the strength to do it in myself i can't it's hard for me to forgive of course it's

hard for you to forgive god always asks too much he's never asking you to do anything that bears witness to his glory in your own strength he's asking you to trust him he's going to help you right now right i'm not asking you to wait until later love somebody today and overcome right now take victory right now over the temptation to be bitter the temptation to hate the temptation to get even those temptations to be contrary to the heart of that one who poured out his life for you and for them love somebody right now because jesus said it it's not about repeating a prayer and not about vain repetition it's about it's about loving somebody loving god with all your heart soul mind and strength loving your neighbor yourself father in the name of the lord jesus christ we choose to forgive and

we choose to love god we're not going to say well when we get home we're going to call this person or that person yes we'll do those things but we're not going to wait we're right here we're right now asking you for the grace to love help us oh jesus give us this day our daily bread we need you to provide for us this capacity we can't do it in ourselves but spirit of god we know that you're faithful and that you're good that

you would never ask us to do a thing without giving us the grace to do it lord and your very commandment is the grace to fulfill it and so you've commanded us to love you didn't simply request it when you were asked what's the great commandment you said this is the great commandment love your neighbor as rather love the lord your god with all your heart soul mind and

strength and then the other is like unto it it is a commandment to love our neighbor we can't do it without you lord would you help us would you help us to forgive now would you help us to take victory over the temptation to hold on to bitterness and anger god in jesus name we simply forgive we're not looking to be overwhelmed by emotion we're not looking we're making a free will decision to love we love today as god speaks to your heart would you simply from your heart and in your heart say i love and you put that person's name there you simply say i love and you put that person's name there don't worry about a flood of emotion don't worry about that this is a choice that you're making god i love such and such a person because when you say that you take victory over temptation father i

thank you for my brothers and my sisters now pray you lay your hand upon each one oh god some of these times are difficult sometimes it's hard oh god lay your hands on each one oh god invite us into the greater life the enemy wants to invite us into a lesser life but you have invited us into your life and so we thank you for that oh god and we bless you for it in jesus holy name we pray amen amen the lord jesus be with you

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