

The Cause of Fights and Unanswered Prayers

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[0:00] James 3, beginning in verse 13. Who is wise and understanding among you, let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

! But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from heaven, but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder. And every evil practice. But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure, then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness. What causes fights and quarrels among you? Do they not come from your desires that battle within you?

You want something, but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God.

[1:07] When you ask, you do not receive because you ask with wrong motives that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. We're going to talk about conflict this morning, that we are all live-wired to heaven.

And every argument and quarrel and fight that we've ever had in our lives, in our homes, where no other eye or ear is seen, has gone directly into heaven. And God has heard every word.

More than that, He says that our thoughts have a voice that He hears. And our motivations are heard in heaven. A humbling reality as we turn to the fourth chapter of James.

Now, chapter 3 ends with peace. Chapter 4 begins with war. Fight, quarrel, battle, kill.

Well, this is language taken from scenes of war. We've seen films. We've seen pictures of war and the devastation.

[2:15] We've seen bombed out buildings. We've seen casualties lying on the ground. Destruction everywhere. And James draws on that kind of language to paint a powerful image to us of the destructiveness of conflict and strife.

It was conflict and strife that existed in the Christian congregations of the first century. They looked more like a war zone than a family of God.

And James is outraged. These things ought not to be. Not among you. Notice how he says it as he begins. What causes fights and quarrels among you?

Among you of all people. You who profess to have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. You of all people ought to be a people of peace in your homes, in your church, in your school, in every relationship.

But instead, there's war. Now, we can sometimes think that the early churches must surely have been the purest of all since after all, they were founded by the holy apostles of Jesus.

[3:33] And we get this fairy tale idea about them. It wasn't so. Every letter of the apostle Paul, which makes up so much of the epistles of the New Testament, every letter to the early churches has portions calling them to peace and unity.

There's a reason for that. The peace and unity was coming unhinged. And so, as he writes to the church of God in Corinth, he must say, My brothers, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you.

Two quarrels that led to ugly divisions. And in his second letter, he must say, I'm afraid that when I come, I may not find you as I want you to be.

I fear that there may be quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, slander, gossip, arrogance, and disorder.

And when writing to the church at Philippi, there were two women in the church who were locked into a prolonged, destructive battle with each other.

[4:43] And so much was that the case in this letter that was a general letter to the whole congregation. He has to call them out by name. I plead with you, Odia, and I plead with Syntyche that they agree in the Lord.

And so to the Galatians, if you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out, or you will be destroyed by each other.

And so here is James. And he's writing to all the people of God in the early Christian church, to the twelve tribes scattered among the nations.

And in this general letter, written to the whole of God's people, he says, what causes fights and quarrels among you?

Notice there's no question or even discussion to prove whether or not this is so. It's the given. Conflicts are the given. Warfare is the reality in the early churches.

[5:49] The only question is why? No, the professing Church of Christ is not that much different 2,000 years later. Just this month, I had a pastor from Georgia tell me on the telephone of a business meeting in his church in which a man stood up and called for the resignation of the pastor on the spot.

And it seems that many other members who hadn't darkened the door of the church for many weeks were conveniently there to also call for the oust of their pastor.

But there were others who appreciated his ministry and stood up and defended him, saying, he's done nothing wrong. He's only preached to us the pure word of God.

And the other side countered, well then, if that's the way you feel, then you are no longer welcome here either. You can leave along with him. And it was a war zone, not of hand-to-hand combat, but mouth-to-mouth combat.

And God takes this defect most seriously because he's aiming at our holiness. And what did we learn last week? We learned that holiness, righteousness, is a harvest that thrives in the soil of peace.

[7:09] But where peace is destroyed in a congregation by conflict and strife, it thwarts the harvest. It stops and stunts the harvest of holiness.

So as we care about holiness, let us open our hearts up to this passage. If you care about being holy, open your heart out to this passage and humbly accept the word planted in you.

And if you do that, you will feel with me. You will sense at once that James has been in our homes. You'll sense that he has been in our church, that he's heard every word of quarreling and fighting that we've ever done.

Indeed, that he's been in our very hearts. Because he writes as one inspired by the Holy Spirit of God, who indeed does dwell in the very hearts of his people.

Notice James' concern. What causes fights and quarrels among you? He's not merely content to treat the symptoms. He doesn't put band-aids on cancer.

[8:21] The symptoms are easy to spot. There are fights and quarrels going on. And he doesn't just stand one in the corner here and the other in the corner there and say, now you stay in the corner until you can come out and talk nice to one another.

You might use that in your home. There might be a place for that. But James wants to go deeper than just that. He wants to go to the root cause and diagnose what is happening here on the inside. So here's a daughter in an ugly argument with her mother. James says, where'd that come from? There's two women in a church, two brothers in a house, two men at work, a husband and wife at home, and they're quarreling and fighting.

And James wants to know, what's causing this? And his answer is really quite remarkable for its simplicity. He says, don't they come from your desires that battle within you?

Your desires. That's the cause. Your passions. Kids, that's your wants. Your yearnings. Your longings. James has already put his finger on these desires.

[9:32] He said in chapter 1, verse 14, that after sinful desire has conceived, it brings forth sin.

He told us, each one of you is tempted when by his own evil desire, he's dragged away and enticed. And so it's these desires and they battle within you.

There's another war word. They're an army of soldiers within you. They're all lined up and they're battling against you. Peter refers to them as warring against the soul.

1 Peter 2, 11. These sinful desires. They're always on active service, ready at the drop of a hat to break out and overpower you or anyone else who gets in their way.

So as Crab and Dam says, the wars among you are caused by the war within you. And if you lose the battle with inward desires, then war with others will result.

[10 : 36] Win the battle on the inside and peace and righteousness and holiness will win on the outside. So James traces our conflicts right back to the cause, our own desires.

Now he goes on to tell us how this all works. Verse 2, the first part of it. You want something, but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want.

You quarrel and fight. Now notice there's a three-step progression here. Number one, you want something. Number two, you don't get it. And number three, so you kill, quarrel, and fight.

You see it? Let's break it down step by step. Number one, you want something. Now this is where all conflict starts with a desire. I want something. And some of our desires are in and of themselves okay.

I'm sorry, let's start with the ones that are in and of themselves wrong. Some of these desires are evil because of what it is we want. We want some forbidden object.

[11 : 48] We want revenge. We want another man's wife. We want another man's job. We want another man's honor and gifts. And we want glory. And these things are wrong because of what it is.

These desires are wrong because of what it is we want. But other desires are not wrong because of what we want. the things that we want are fine.

We want a promotion at work. We want a godly mate. We want a great marriage. We want a well-behaved children.

We want a car that doesn't break down. We want good health. We want respect. And kids, you may want something that you can buy and you've got your eye on it and you want it.

And nothing wrong with what you want. You may want permission to go somewhere with your friends. You may want your turn on the computer when your brother's on it.

[12 : 48] It's okay to want these things and even to seek them in a right way. So it may be hard for us to realize how these kind of desires could be the cause of conflict.

Well, let's go on to the next step. James says, number one, you want something, but, and that's the problem, but you don't get it.

You don't get it. Here's your desire and there's what it wants and it's blocked. Someone or something stands in the way of what you want and yourself.

You can't get to it. And so your desire goes unmet, refused, frustrated. Now, sometimes that's by circumstances.

And I remind you that all circumstances are under God's control. So in essence, God blocks your desire. Many times it's by people in our lives and they stand in the way between us and what we desire.

[13 : 53] And I remind you again that God is in control of every one of those people that stand between you and what you desire. But think of that when it's a person who stands between you and what you want and it's because of them that you don't get it.

Mom's the one who says, we're not going to buy that sweater. And dad's the one who says, you're not going there with your friends. And brother's the one who won't give you your turn on the computer.

You cannot have what you want because someone's standing in your way keeping you from getting it. You wanted well-behaved children, but try as you might, they keep failing you.

You wanted a great marriage, but your spouse continues to disappoint you and come short of your expectations. Your boss continues to pass you by when he hands out the promotion to the other guy.

And folks, this is the critical moment of truth. Right here, it's like a why in the road when our desires are crossed. We have this why in the road.

[15 : 03] And how you respond determines whether it will end in peace or in conflict. What will you do with unmet blocked desires when you cannot have what you want? Well, notice what James says happens next.

You want something? Number two, you can't get it. Number three, so you kill, quarrel, and fight. In other words, you take out your frustration on the one who's blocking your desires.

He's not giving me a good marriage, a great marriage. then I'm going to complain and nag and pout and not give him what he wants. She's not letting me have what I want, so I'll get angry and fight

back and make life miserable for her.

And when we fight for what we want, our hearts are revealed. Wow! Light just shines in.

And what do we see? We see that fighting for what we want reveals our idols. Our idols. Idols of the heart. John Calvin says of these inward evil desires.

[16:12] He says, the evil in our desires often lies not in what we want, but that we want it too much. So an evening to relax after coming home from work is a fine thing to want, but if I demand it, then it's no innocent desire that I have.

It's an idolatrous desire, an evil desire. Because that desire starts to rule me and determine what I do.

It is sitting in the place of God. God alone is to satisfy me. God alone is to control me. But God's not enough. I must have this thing or I won't be happy.

I won't be satisfied. If I don't get this, there's going to be war. So if my kids are acting up when I come home and they're keeping me from the thing that I desire, which was just a quiet, relaxing evening at home, then I can aim my frustration at them and I can discipline them in an unreasonable, angry, harsh manner manner that is more full of spite and hatred than it is of love. And when I do that, I've just seen and uncovered an idol in my heart. I want a relaxing evening too much.

[17:40] I was helped again by reading Ken Sandy's book *The Peacemaker* where he traces the progression of an idol. It starts with I desire and it becomes I demand.

Then it becomes I judge. And last, I punish. I punish anyone who keeps me from my desires. And I find ways to hurt those who do not give me what I want.

And I do this so that they will regret having blocked my desire and so that they will give in to me.

And the punishment can take many different forms, many different ways that we fight and quarrel and kill.

It may be an angry word, a hurtful word. We meant it to hurt them, a belittling word, a tongue set on fire by hell.

We let them have it. Or it might actually be violent actions. You're not going to give me what I want, so I'm going to destroy something that you want.

[18:39] fits of rage, temper tantrums. It may be pouting and sulking. It may be the dirty looks of a child looking at his father who's just refused permission to go somewhere.

Young person, you must have what you want to be happy. And when you don't get it, you label mom or dad as your enemy and you're going to make life miserable for them.

That's the quarreling, fighting, and killing that James is putting his finger on. It may be the silent treatment, the cold shoulder, the withdrawal, the depression of a spouse which is punishment for what he or she is not giving me.

Bitter, resentful distance that comes between us. And it's all a manipulative threat. Either you give me what I want or you will pay. Now, there's not a one of us here that don't know what James means then when he follows this progression.

We want something, we can't have it, and so we kill, fight, and quarrel. How can I know when a desire has become an idol in my heart? There's legitimate desires, but how can I know when it becomes an idol and I want it too much?

[20:04] Well, the sure sign, James says, is that we fight and quarrel either to get it or because we didn't get it. Fighting and quarreling becomes the spotlight that exposes the idol.

There it is, sparkling in all of its splendor every time we fight and quarrel over something we want. I've given it the status of an idol. James says, this is what causes fights and quarrels among you, your own evil desires.

James says, you kill as well as quarrel and fight. Some commentators say that's too strong a word, must be a wrong text here, must be a different word that he meant or that translators slipped up on or scribes.

But James means that. You kill. He's showing just how ruthless we can be in our attempts to remove the one keeping us from our desires. And the warning is this, that apart from restraining grace, we'll stop at nothing to get what we want.

Do you think that's an overstatement? An exaggeration? We want, we don't get it, so we kill. King Ahab wanted something. He looked out his palace window and he saw a vineyard and it belonged to Naboth and Naboth didn't want to sell.

[21:29] He wanted, he couldn't get it. So kids, what did he do? He had him killed, removed, that he might get what he wanted.

Oh yes, you kill. You say, oh, he's an unconverted man, an unregenerate man. We can understand that. But James is talking to professing believers here. Well, how about King David? He wanted a night with Bathsheba without the shame of it all.

But her husband Uriah wasn't playing the game right and stood in the way. He was blocking. So David had him conveniently removed.

Killed. Oh yes, you kill. You kill when you can't get what you want. Now, no one here that I know of has actually murdered someone outwardly for something you wanted.

You'd probably be in jail today. But you have hated someone who stood in your way. You've had resentment in your heart towards that person, which Jesus says in Matthew 5:22 is murder in the heart and places you in danger of the fire of hell.

[22:46] That's Jesus on hatred in the heart. And the apostle John, the apostle of love says in 1 John 3:15, anyone who hates his brother is a murderer.

Oh yes, you want, you can't have, and so you kill. You kill. You quarrel. You fight. Who knows what your desires will lead to?

So there's the three steps. I want, I can't, get it, so I kill, quarrel, and fight.

You see, what a wonderful diagnostic tool James is giving us. Whenever we're in conflict, whenever we're in an argument, some hatred spewing out of our mouths, we stop and we say, let's trace that back to the cause.

What desire is there in my heart? What am I wanting from him that he is not giving me? What am I wanting from her that she's not giving me? That he or she is blocking in my life?

[23:53] And there you have your finger on the idol and it's time to go and confess it to God and to the person. You see, the worst thing is not that your desire is destroying your relationship with the other person.

It is doing that. But the worst, the far greater serious thing is that it's destroying your relationship with God. That's the far greater thing here.

That some other desire is occupying the place that God alone is to have in your heart. He himself is to be enough to satisfy you. He's to be all that you need to be content whatever else you do or don't have.

but you are demonstrating that he isn't enough and that you have desires that are diverted from him and on to something else.

In verse 4, James is going to call it spiritual adultery. You've gone off with another lover. You've forsaken your first love. And oh, this is how we need to view these idols in our hearts.

[25:00] There's no real effective treatment of idols in our hearts, of selfish desires that doesn't redirect our hearts back to God in Christ. It's all futile trying to root out these evil desires unless we come back to the Lord Jesus and give him again our hearts, our first love, so that he's filling us.

He's satisfying. He's our delight and our heart's desire. So Cooper says, the dearest idol I have known, whatever that idol be, help me to tear it from thy throne and worship only thee.

That's our response as we come to see our idol. Let's go back and revisit that moment of truth that is the why, the fork in the road.

I've wanted something, I can't get it. What should I do at that point? What should I do about my unmet desires? Well, I should take them to the Lord Jesus in prayer.

I should take my desires and I should go right to the throne of grace and say, Lord Jesus, this is what I want. And I present it before you.

[26:17] And I lay these desires at your feet and I submit them to you. Not what I want, but your will be done. And then I go on my way delighting in Jesus, knowing that my desires could not be in better hands than when I've placed them into his hands.

Because he's committed to do me good. He will never stop doing me good. He will only do me good. He will not withhold anything good. He will work all things together for my good.

And so I can go on my way trusting in the Lord and doing good to that one who's blocking my desire. Loving her, praying for him, serving her.

prayer. Psalm 73:7. Trust in the Lord and do good. Now that's what we should do. That's what we should do.

And that's what James tells us we should do in the last part of verse 2. He says you fight, quarrel, and kill because you don't get what you want, but you do not have because you do not ask God. [27:26] You see, fighting and quarreling is not the way to get what you want. It's not the way to have your desires fulfilled. There is a way to seek what you desire. It's called prayer.

It's called asking. Indeed, the Westminster Larger Catechism asks question 178, what is prayer? And it responds in this way, a summary of the teaching of the Bible.

Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God. What are you to do with these desires in your heart? You're to offer them up to God.

That's what prayer is. What does he say to us in Psalm 62? Pour out your hearts before him. You go and you tell him everything. You're welcome to come and make all your wants and wishes known there at the throne of grace.

Prayer is the offering up of our desires unto God. For the law of the kingdom of Christ is that if you would receive, you must ask. And you have not because you ask not.

[28:35] Ask and you will receive, Jesus says. For everyone that asks, receives. But you see, these people sought their desires not from God through prayer, but by fights and quarrels with each other.

By manipulating each other and fighting, jockeying for position to get what they wanted. And their conflicts are due to these desires, yes, but now he says they're due to a failure to pray.

And a failure to pray aright, to pray properly. For he goes on to say in verse 3, when you ask, first you don't ask, and that's why you don't have.

But now he says, even when you do ask, you do not receive. Because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your own pleasures.

Isn't it something that the commitment to selfish desire that spoils their relationships with men follows them right into their prayer closet and spoils their prayer walk with God?

[29:43] You've got the same problem at prayer that you've got at home, in your marriage, in the church with your brother, your sister, at school with your friends. love. It's this commitment to self.

I have to have what I want. That's the defect in their prayers. It's their motive. The reason you pray is just to satisfy your selfish desires. It's not for God's glory.

That's the real concern in your prayer, whatever the flowery speech about that you might be honored and glorified. The real bottom line with you, James says, is that you're asking for your own pleasures, your own desires to get what you want selfishly.

So what breaks their peace with men now pollutes their prayers with God. And it is a crime, brethren, when we stoop to have God, to use God to satisfy our idolatrous, selfish desires.

There stands the idol in my heart. I must have this thing or I'm not happy. And I would even storm into the presence of God and ask him to bow down to my idol.

[30:51] Give me what I want, God. Oh, in Jesus' name, give me what I want. We would make God our celestial bell boy to jump at our whims, but God is not playing that game.

And so he says, when you ask, you don't receive. You see, these poor people, they've got desires. Their hearts are full of desires. Their hearts are factories producing desires and not getting what they want.

Men and people are blocking their desires. They can't get, there's no satisfaction. So they come to God, give me what I want, and God's not hearing them because of their self-centeredness.

And they're frustrated. They're not happy campers at all because they're not getting what they want. Oh, they're not asking aright.

The right rule of prayer is laid down by our Savior. Not my will, but yours be done. And so true prayer is setting our desires before him, but then saying to him, Lord, what I want more than anything else.

[31:52] Yes, I would like to have a great marriage, but Lord, what I want more than anything else is that you be glorified in this. And so I will consider it all joy that my marriage isn't what I want it to be, but that you have some lessons in holiness to teach me.

And I will rejoice in this occasion to grow in holiness. And I will lay my request at your feet and say, in your timing, in your will, I would like that marriage.

That's the only way to pray. Don't we see it in our Lord's model prayer? How did our Lord teach us to pray? Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

You see, prayer is the offering up of our desires for the honoring of God's name, for the expansion of his kingdom, for the doing of his will.

How different from prayers that rise no higher than bless me, O Lord, bless me and mine, bless my family, bless my sermon, bless my Sunday school lesson, bless my ministry, but we have no concern for the greater expansion of the kingdom that doesn't have anything to do with my direct ministry.

[33 : 24] O Lord, bless the work of the Favs over in Switzerland. Lord, take the preaching of the gospel in Grenoble, France this morning and breathe upon the gospel and bring sinners to repentance and faith, to lose ourselves in the greater cause of God's name, God's kingdom, God's will being done.

That's how we're taught to pray. That is to be first and foremost in our minds when we pray. God's will, God's will, God's kingdom, God's honor.

Oh, I don't care about praying for the missionaries. I don't care about prayer meetings where we pray for labors and far-flung fields and churches. Never been there.

Don't care about that. But oh, if I've got an operation, I want my request on the prayer chain, please. I want everybody fervent in prayer for me, for me, for mine, this one that I'm concerned about.

Oh, James is saying, when you ask, you do not receive because you desire. It's just all to feed your selfish desire. And so if ever we need to seek first God's kingdom and God's righteousness, it's when we pray, brothers and sisters.

[34 : 45] It's when we pray. That's God's priority and our prayers must reflect that. I like what Ropes says, commenting on this. He says, make the service of God your supreme end and then your desires will be such as that God can fulfill in answer to your prayers.

David put it this way, you delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart. the very things that you desire will be such that he'll open up the floodgates of heaven and pour it out on you because you're no longer seeking my name, my kingdom, my will.

You're seeking his name, his kingdom, his will. And he loves to answer those kind of prayers. We saw it in Sunday school. For every true virtue, there's a false counterfeit.

There's a counterfeit of it. We saw it with zeal this morning in the adult class. But James has been showing us that all through his letter, hasn't he? There's a religion that is worthless and there's a religion that God our Father accepts as pure.

And there's a faith that's useless and there's one that saves you. And there's a wisdom that comes from above and there's one that comes from hell.

[36 : 08] And there are prayers that are true, false prayers and there are prayers that are true prayers. Here's how you'll know them. False prayer is self-centered.

Me, my, I. True prayer is God-centered. You, yours. False prayer is happiness-oriented. Make me happy.

Fulfill my desires. True prayer is holiness-oriented. Glorify your name by making me more like Jesus. Give me what you know will do me good and make me holy.

False prayer is marked by my desires. True prayer by God's desires. And so these folks were not asking according to God's will. They weren't submitting their desires to him.

They were demanding that what they wanted they get and it wreaked havoc in their relationships and they came to the throne of grace with the same selfish desires. prayers and heaven's doors slam shut.

[37 : 09] Wrong motivation. Wrong motivation. Ever wonder why James brings up the subject of prayer here in chapter 4?

I mean, we often dip into this, you have not because you ask not. I must confess, I've often seen that phrase and built sermons on it, but I've been struck with, why does James just right here bring up the subject of prayer?

Praying properly with the right motivation. Well, he says he wants us to see that, you see, self, self desires are the same thing that ruin relationships with conflict and ruin our prayers with God.

This is the cause. This is why there are fights and quarrels among you. Because you are seeking your own desires rather than bringing them to God and laying them at his feet.

Oh, we're memorizing today Philippians 2, 3. Do nothing out of selfish ambition and vain conceit. Do nothing, and James is saying, never pray out of selfish ambition.

[38:21] Never pray with this self-centered desire on the throne. So what's your first concern in your prayers? Is it God or is you? I can't come away from this passage without being convicted of my sins in prayer.

I'm convicted about the motivation of my prayers. Why do I want God to bless Grace Fellowship Church? Why do I want him to come and own his word this morning?

Why do I want my children to be saved? God? Is it that I might have a life with less ruffles? Or is it that God might be glorified in taking another sinner, changing their hearts and making Christ precious to them because he truly is precious and he truly deserves the glory of every life worshiping him?

Could I ask you a question this morning? when is the last time you have had to pray confessing your sin of praying?

I would say this morning ought to be the first time if you haven't ever or ought to be the next time because that's what we find that our prayers themselves are shot through with this selfish desire and we must even after praying say oh God there's a lot of self that's going under disguise it's under the radar I can't even see it but oh wash it and cleanse it by the blood of Jesus and make me to desire his glory and not mine let me be forgotten let much be made of Jesus you may not be a believer this morning do you know there's nothing more wicked in the eyes of heaven than for you to live for your own selfish desires that's it you just want what you want and and you're not happy until you get what you want that my friend is looking into

[40:37] God's face and saying your son is no big deal oh I know you said that he is to be enough to satisfy me for time and eternity but no he's not enough I've got to have this or I'm not going to be I've got to have my selfishness I've got to have life go my way that is such a blasphemous thought against the son of God who is so worthy and if you just saw him for who he was you would be in repentance you would be doing what James is going to tell us in verse nine you would grieve mourn and wail and you would cleanse your hands you sinners and and purify your hearts your double minded why because you see how dirty you are that that you have not come and worshiped and given your heart over to this Savior and so we come to the garden of Gethsemane there's a man there a real man and he's sweating as it were great drops of blood and he's praying and we listen what is he praying he's saying father if it be possible let this cup pass from me and it's it's Jesus of

Nazareth it's the son of God taking on our flesh and now God the father for the last time is setting the cup of his own wrath for sin into his hands and saying here drink this cup drink it for your people that you might receive all the punishment that their sins deserve here it is this is the hell they deserve this is the condemnation the forsakenness drink it and this perfect man says father if it is possible take this cup from me father here's what I desire as a man without thinking at all of what you want just as a man what I want is this to know the smile of your face like I've known it for all eternity to know that you love me to have that sense of your presence with me to know that I am yours and you are mine and that you are well pleased with me that's what I want father but you're asking me to be forsaken by you to be condemned under your wrath to see not your smile but your your frown your anger your wrath father if it be possible let this cup pass from me nevertheless not what I want but what you want and he's teaching us to pray by his own example in prayer we set our desires before him and then we say but what I really want father is what you want and no one ever died more willingly than the son of God for he embraced the father's will as his own will and he goes to the cross and willingly lays down his life for us for us here in in 2009 who pray such self-centered prayers who fight such self-centered battles in our marriages and in our churches and in our schools in our schools in our workplace and he denies himself of what perfect desires were rightly his that he might atone for my wicked idolatrous selfish desires all that he learned from my savior to pray father not my will but yours be done your kingdom your glory your name amen let's pray our father we have found again this morning that your word is indeed living and active sharper than a double edged sword it penetrates to the very depths of our hearts and reveals our thoughts and motivations and what we see is not pretty what we see is an ugly thing nothing more ugly than when we see our savior laying down even a desire to see your smile and to take up the wrath that should have been mine and to drink that cup to the dregs to be forsaken abandoned that I might be forgiven oh lord teach me all over again what it is to offer up my life my will to say here it is lord it's it's yours you're the potter I'm the clay come and do that work afresh in all of our hearts every time we have your law your word expose our hearts you you want us back on our knees before our savior and just owning that he is all our righteousness he's all our hope he's all our our justification

our our sanctification our redemption so do your good work among us and and
lead us to prayers for your glory living for your glory and may our congregation may our homes
reflect that peace and order that comes from your wisdom and your work in our hearts we ask in
Jesus name amen may may may may may may may may may may