

Search Me!

Message 02 in the series "Dangerous Prayers"

1. God wants us to pray about everything, so we don't need to worry about anything.

"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)

"Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you." 1 Peter 5:7 (NLT)

Note: If you're going to worry, don't pray. If you're going to pray, don't worry!

2. God wants us to pray bold, confident prayers.

"So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most." Hebrews 4:16 (NLT)

"...O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word. Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus.' After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness." Acts 4:29-31 (NLT)

"Jehoshaphat stood before the community of Judah and Jerusalem in front of the new courtyard at the Temple of the Lord. He prayed, 'O Lord, God of our ancestors, you alone are the God who is in heaven. You are ruler of all the kingdoms of the earth. You are powerful and mighty; no one can stand against you!' ...'O our God, won't you stop them? We are powerless against this mighty army that is about to attack us. We do not know what to do, but we are looking to you for help.'" 2 Chronicles 20:5-6,12 (NLT)

3. God wants us to pray "dangerous" prayers like, "Search me!"

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life." Psalm 139:23-24 (NLT)

Note: David wasn't only asking God to do something for him; he was asking God to do something in him.

a. Search me, O God, and know my heart.

Note: We need to ask God to search our hearts because we frequently deceive ourselves.

"The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?" Jeremiah 17:9 (NLT)

"You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you, for he wrote, 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship is a farce, for they teach man-made ideas as commands from God.'" Matthew 15:7-9 (NLT) (see also Isaiah 29:13)

b. Test me and know my anxious thoughts.

"Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this: ...Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; ...do not fret—it leads only to evil." Psalm 37:3-8 (NIV)

Note: What we fear the most often reveals where we trust God the least.

"Then Jesus got into the boat and started across the lake with his disciples. Suddenly, a fierce storm struck the lake, with waves breaking into the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. The disciples went and woke him up, shouting, 'Lord, save us! We're going to drown!' Jesus responded, 'Why are you afraid? You have so little faith!' Then he got up and rebuked the wind and waves, and suddenly there was a great calm. The disciples were amazed. 'Who is this man?' they asked. 'Even the winds and waves obey him!'"

Matthew 8:23-27 (NLT)

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline."

2 Timothy 1:7(NLT)

c. Point out anything in me that offends you.

"There is no fear of God before their eyes. In their own eyes they flatter themselves too much to detect or hate their sin." Psalm 36:1b-2 (NIV)

“Let the righteous [thoughtfully] strike (correct) me—it is a kindness [done to encourage my spiritual maturity].” Psalm 141:5 (AMP)

“For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.”

Hebrews 4:12 (NLT)

d. Lead me along the path of everlasting life.

“The Lord says, ‘I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you. Do not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control.’ Many sorrows come to the wicked, but unfailing love surrounds those who trust the Lord.” Psalm 32:8-10 (NLT)

Note: Our deepest need becomes a gift when it moves us to depend on Christ.

“Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today.”

Matthew 6:33-34 (NLT)

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Connect Group Questions

1. Share one New Year’s resolution you’ve made for 2021. What inspired you to do so?
2. Hebrews 4:16 says, “So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.” How well does this verse describe your prayer life? Are your prayers bold or tame? What kind of prayer life would you like to have?
3. Read Psalm 139:23-24. Have you ever asked God to search your heart? If not, why not? If so, what did He show you?
4. David asked God to reveal his anxious thoughts. What concerns are you anxious about? What problem or difficult situation is keeping you awake at night?
5. Read Psalm 37:3-8 and 2 Timothy 1:7. Then discuss the following statement: “What we fear the most often reveals where we trust God the least.”
6. Read Hebrews 4:12, Psalm 32:8-10, and Psalm 141:5. Has God ever spoken to you through a sermon, your Bible reading, a worship song, or a friend? Has He ever nudged you to do something through prayer? Talk about a time when you know God was leading you.
7. Spend some time as a group praying for each other, our church, and our country.
8. Discuss the following quotations:

“The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?” Jeremiah 17:9

“Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin, and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen; such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven on Earth.” John Wesley

“Bold prayers honor God, and God honors bold prayers. God isn’t offended by your biggest dreams or boldest prayers.” Mark Batterson

Great Resource:

Dangerous Prayers: Because Following Jesus was Never meant to be Safe. By Craig Groeschel, Zondervan, 2020