

Your Problems ... God's Answers
"Deliver Us From Evil"
Matthew 6:9-13

- I. Today we're wrapping up our series on the Lord's Prayer.
 - a. We've been examining Our Problems ... & God's Answers.
 - b. God's answers to our guilt, to our fears, to our worries, to our relationships.
 - c. And today – God's answer to our Fears.
- II. I have to tell you ... this may be the toughest week of the last seven.
 - a. Evil is a reality.
 - i. We've seen the news ...
 - ii. The images of the WTC and 9-11 are still fresh in my mind 6 years later.
 - iii. Darfur, Pakistan, Myanmar (Burma), Somalia, Zimbabwe.
 - b. But I don't have to look halfway around the world to see that evil is real.
 - i. Young children's lives destroyed by abuse.
 - ii. Families falling apart – ruptured by addictions.
 - iii. Hurtful memories, scars that we've carried since childhood.
 - c. In the face of the reality of evil; fear is a natural & human reaction.
 - i. If you're not afraid ... I think you're fooling yourself.
 - ii. There's a lot that's wrong with the world and sooner or later it makes its way to your house.
 - iii. Can I make my house payment? Will my job get downsized? Are my kids safe?
 - iv. Evil has power and that power is a fearful thing.
 - d. And along comes Jesus who says, "deliver us from evil." {Matthew 6:13}
 - i. So the reality of our fear in the face of real and powerful evil ...
 - ii. Is met by Jesus who says, "There is deliverance from evil."
- III. Here's where it gets difficult.
 - a. The world's messed up.
 - b. Evil is real and it looks like evil is winning.
 - i. Things are not getting better.
 - ii. Our lives are a train wreck.
 - iii. And if we haven't jumped the tracks just yet, its taking everything we have just to hold it together.
 - c. God is real and has the power to put an end to it all right away.
 - i. God could banish our fears in a moment.
 - ii. He has promised us deliverance.
 - iii. So why are things still so messed up?
 - d. We're looking at a few choices.
 - i. We're not paying attention.
 - ii. Jesus lied – there is no deliverance.
 - iii. We've misunderstood what Jesus is promising us.
 - e. We can narrow the field a bit.
 - i. Jesus didn't lie. That just doesn't fit his character and everything else I know and have experienced about him.
 - ii. It's possible we're not paying attention.
 1. I've heard more than a few preachers talk about deliverance and it just sounded like pie in the sky "fluff" to me.
 2. It felt like they weren't really acknowledging the reality of the world around them and were sticking to feel good saccharine coated answers.

3. But I want answers that deal with real questions and real life – and I think you do also.
 - iii. So we're left with the possibility that we've misunderstood what Jesus is trying to teach us – let's take that possibility seriously.
- IV. What does deliverance look like in the Bible?
- a. Deliverance is not about escape.
 - i. Deliverance is a very prominent theme in the OT.
 1. Israel in Egypt.
 2. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach & Abednego.
 3. Moses trapped between Pharaoh's Army and the Red Sea.
 4. It's everywhere in God's story.
 - ii. Deliverance is never about avoiding the pain or side-stepping the struggle.
 1. Israel – slaves for 400 years before God sends Moses.
 2. Daniel – into the Lion's Den and then God sends angels to deliver him.
 3. S-M-A – into the fiery furnace at its hottest and then God rescues them.
 - iii. Deliverance is not about escape.
 1. "Come to Jesus and everything will be fine." – no wonder people turn away.
 2. God never promises a life free from pain, struggle, sorrow and hurt.
 - b. Deliverance is about protection.
 - i. We're part of God's resistance movement.
 1. We're God's underground – which he wants above ground.
 2. Right now we're in the middle of a spiritual battle for the hearts and souls of every man, woman and child.
 - a. We don't recognize this battle.
 - b. We don't understand that every story (including yours) has an enemy.
 3. In the face of an intractable enemy (this enemy won't negotiate) you have two choices.
 - a. Surrender.
 - b. Switch sides – joining the enemy.
 - c. Or keep on fighting.
 - ii. Deliver us from despair - surrender. {Giving up}
 1. It would be easy to take a look around you at the way of the world and give up.
 2. In the face of all this evil, in the face of the things that make you fearful about the future – to say, "There is no hope."
 3. God will deliver us from that despair.
 - a. This life requires strength.
 - b. In Philippians, Paul says it requires "pressing on."
 4. Rather than surrendering to the enemy – God brings deliverance.
 - a. Don't give up!
 - b. Keep on keepin' on.
 - iii. Deliver us from giving in. {Joining the enemy}
 1. The Bible makes it clear that there is a prince and ruler of this world in Philippians 3.
 - a. It also makes it clear that we're supposed to be resisting that empire and its ruler.
 - b. Ephesians 6:12 – "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

2. But a lot of people abandon the struggle and (in effect) switch sides.
 - a. Some because they want to be on the winning side and at times it seems like that other side is winning.
 - b. Others because they don't want to deal with the difficulties and vulnerabilities that come with serving God.
 - c. Even Christ-followers switch sides – they claim the name of Christ but live their lives by the principles and the strategies of the Enemy.
3. God brings deliverance from these temptations and helps us to stand up to the ways of the Enemy.
 - a. Deliverance is about protection.
 - b. Deliverance is about preserving you (the beloved of God) and keeping you pure.
- c. Deliverance is about a way through.
 - i. This is that third option – keep on fighting. Don't give up. Don't lose heart.
 1. Life is a full contact sport. It's going to get rough.
 2. But life is also a team sport. You're not in this one alone.
 3. And the coach (the team owner) knows all the plays.
 - ii. Deliverance is about a promise – I'm not leaving you alone.
 1. You're going to face trial, tribulations, difficulties and all manner of evil.
 2. But I'll bring you through it. I'll make a way.
 3. We'll walk the road together.
 - a. Just like I came to Israel in the wilderness and showed them to the Promised Land.
 - b. Just like I stood in the fiery furnace with S-M-A.
 - c. Just like I lived with my people Israel in exile and then showed them a way back home.
 - iii. Deliverance is about knowing that – in the end – ultimately – God will show you a way.
 1. At dawn on the third day.
 2. Resurrection – At dawn on the third day.
 3. God's light shines through.
- d. Deliverance is about becoming more like Christ.
 - i. What are you trying to teach me?
 - ii. What are you trying to show me?
 - iii. Who are you asking me to reach out to?