

DANGEROUS PRAYERS

- A. We talk a lot about prayer in the church, but do we really believe in it?
- B. Do we really trust God enough to pray prayers we know he'll answer?

SEARCH ME

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. (Psalm 139:23-24)

- A. David summons his courage and prays
- B. We've all seen/known people living in defiance of God
 - 1. If we pray this prayer there'll be a flood of repentance
 - 2. But none of that will happen unless we actually pray the "search me" prayer
 - a. When we pray it, the Spirit will turn the spotlight on what needs changing
 - b. Then it might be very difficult to deal with what God exposes
 - 3. Most of us know exactly where the spotlight would go
 - a. So many refuse to pray this prayer
 - b. We don't want to let go of it - sin has its pleasures
 - c. Or, we might have to redefine a relationship
- C. This prayer is high risk - because it will require a decision

STRETCH ME

On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David, "Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain. The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed one.' Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. (Acts 4:23-31)

- A. In Acts 4, believers come together to pray a "stretch me" prayer
- B. Have you ever asked God to stretch you?
 - 1. Ever stood in a line steaming and asked God to increase your patience?

- 2. Ever asked God to slow you down and increase your capacity to love?
- 3. Ever prayed, "God, increase my giving until it hurts?"

C. This prayer is high risk - it demands a bigger heart, a deeper faith

LEAD ME

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. (Psalm 23:1-4)

- A. This prayer deals with the foundation of life: Life is about God's leading
- B. This is a high-risk prayer because God will not lead if we are in the way
 - 1. But if we pray this sincerely, God will hear it, and answer it
 - 2. When the guidance comes, and we're obedient, we'll be on an adventure
- C. Our life is really important. It is the only one we have
 - 1. God tends to lead lives only when he is invited to do so
 - 2. We need to go away, get by ourselves and pray, "God lead my life"

USE ME

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:10)

- A. We were designed to be used in the hands of God
 - 1. God decided to use ordinary people like you and me
 - 2. One of the most powerful prayers you can pray is "use me"
- B. The goal is when life is over is to be completely expended for the sake of God—no tread left on my tires, no shine on the shovel
 - 1. Life is about being used by God—having the scars or dings to show for it
 - 2. Living life, experiencing joy; Being full of stories to tell
- C. God will not commandeer tools. But if we ask, he will put us to use!
- D. Four dangerous prayers God inevitably answers:
 - 1. These prayers will transform your life
 - 2. These are prayers we need to pray - every day