



Sermon – April 10, 2022  
Phillip Bethancourt

**Verses Covered This Week**

*Matthew 7:1 – 11*

Let me invite you to open your Bibles with me. We're going to spend our time in Matthew chapter 7. And as you're turning there, will y'all let the college team know how much you enjoyed them leading us in worship today? Christ was magnified during that time together. And if you're a guest with us today for the, whether you're in the room or online, welcome home. We love that you're here. Especially maybe you're in town for family weekend and got to experience a bit of Aggieland this Sunday. We come to God's word each week trusting that He's going to work through it to change our life. And over the last couple of weeks, we've been centered as a church on 21 days of prayer. If you remember, our focus has been a theme verse out of Psalm 54, verse 2:

<sup>2</sup>O God, hear my prayer; give ear to the words of my mouth.

And we've been praying for 2 specific prayer requests. And I'm so excited to celebrate that we've seen one of those 2 requests answered. Because just this past Wednesday night, through our church vote, we were able to call Shane Mikeska as our Missions Minister and Ben Prater as our new Worship Minister. Anybody excited about that? Man, it's just amazing that God has provided these 2 men in fulfillment of part of our Psalm 54:2 prayer. And we're right in the middle of those conversations about transitions. You know how it goes. They've got to figure out how to wrap up school and transition out of their job well, and figure out selling a house and buying a house and all those things. And I just want to challenge you to pray for the Praters and the Mikeskas during this time. We see God answering prayer already for Psalm 54:2 and I'm trusting that He'll do it again as we over the next few weeks talk more and more about our Training Program we're preparing to launch in the Fall and asking God to raise up at least 54 of

you to take a step into that this Fall semester. And the reason we're doing these things, is because we believe that the God of the universe delights in the prayer of His people. That He hears us and that He responds to us. And it's fitting that we come to this text in Matthew 7 on Palm Sunday. Because right here on the front end of this holy week, we are captured by God's design for our life. We are reminded of what Jesus does because we know that Easter changes everything. And we've seen God already doing that in our prayer lives over these 21 days. So if you're getting the text alert each day, when you click through to that link, there's a chance for you to join the conversation and put a comment on there, what the Lord's been teaching you. And on one of the first days that we started this, there was one of the men in our church who put a comment up and said, "This 21 day prayer focus has sparked one of the first times I prayed together with my family in a long time." I heard from another man in our church who in an answer to prayer said, "You know, I wanted to be more intentional coming into work each day to pray. But I felt like, man, if I give up time actually getting things done in order to pray, that might undermine my productivity. It might make me more anxious." And so he decided to carve out 10 minutes. And then that 10 minutes grew to 20 minutes of focused prayer when he got into the office. And what he's found over the course of this time is not only has he been able to enjoy God's presence to reshape his heart as he started the work day, but God has blessed his efforts and his productivity hasn't fallen off. His anxiety hasn't increased. That's the power of prayer at work in our lives and it's exactly what we want to focus our hearts on this morning. In fact, I have sensed the impact of your prayers over this 21 days. So, last night, as I was starting to turn my focus to the message this morning. I just experienced an unusual spiritual resistance last night. Like the enemy was out to get me. And in that moment, I've, I sent a few texts to different leaders in our church just asking them, "Would you pray for me? I'm sensing this spiritual resistance." And within minutes. I start getting responses from them. They're praying for me. In fact, one of them was with our couples and young families life group men's retreat, and the thirty of them that were out there stopped and prayed over me right at that moment. And then as if I could feel that resistance melt away. As your pastor, I need your prayers just as much as you need prayers. And God provides. He meets us in our prayers and that's what we're going to find this morning as we turn our attention to Matthew 7 in verse 1. And then before we read the text, want to, want you to know in advance of three ways I'm going to invite you to respond today. For one, you see the tables around here with our Lord's Supper elements as we normally do during the response song. I want to invite you to make your ways to those tables. If you'll be partaking with us today. In addition to that, this will be the last Sunday we're inviting you to take one of those prayer cards. It's right there in the seat back in front of you and to fill that out with a specific prayer request or specific answer. In fact, I want to ask you if you'd be willing to just grab one out of there right now and hold on to it as we go through the message and ask God to lay something on your heart that we can lift up. Our staff has been praying for each of these specifically every week and we want to do that again. But the one other thing that we're going to do that we haven't yet done together as a church is at the end of the message we're going to have

a moment of corporate prayer together. If you were with us this past Wednesday night, we did something very similar and it was so powerful. I want to do it again in here where at that time I'm going to tell you about a few different groups of people that we want to pray for as a church. And I'm going to invite you to stand up where you're seated if you need prayer in that specific area and those that are around you are going to pray over you during that time. And so I'd ask you to open your hearts to that as we open God's word to Matthew 7. Here's how the text begins. Verse 1:

<sup>1</sup>“Judge not, that you be not judged. <sup>2</sup>For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. <sup>3</sup>Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? <sup>4</sup>Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? <sup>5</sup>You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

Let's pray together. Father, in this time, as we turn our hearts back to your word, I pray that you would clear the distractions. That the cares of this world would fade away, and that instead we would fix our eyes on Jesus. That we would see the gift of prayer more clearly, so that we might live it out more faithfully. And that by doing that, Lord, you would change our lives, you would change our hearts, that you would change our church. We ask these things in Christ's name. Amen.

Well, Cami and I got married back in 2005 and I feel like it was a different generation when it came to marriage. So, back then, there were no hashtags for your wedding. There were no engagement parties after you got engaged. I don't even know if my friends knew for like several days that we had gotten engaged. And one of the best things about it for the guy is there was no expectation for the, the groom to be ever show up at a wedding shower. Praise the Lord. I didn't have to go there but I remember those moments when Cami was there and I'd come help up load up the gifts and haul them back afterwards and she described to me how these things work. And it just almost a mesmerizing thing. I'm like, let me get this straight. You're saying, women sit around the room and they'll hand you a gift and you open it in front of everybody. You don't know what it is. It could be something you love that you're excited about. It's something that's on the registry that you couldn't wait to get and when you open it, you're excited. Everybody's excited. But I saw some of the gifts we got and there's no way they were on our registry and there's no way that she was genuinely excited in the moment. But when you open Aunt Flossy's knickknack in front of everybody, you've gotta pretend as if it's the best thing that's ever happened to you. That this gift is exactly what you've been needing. You just didn't even recognize it. And so you put on that front in the moment and then you're faced with the question, what do I do with this thing? Do we keep it hidden and then bring it out when Aunt

Flossy comes to town so that she can think we use it all the time? You're wrestling with how to do it and embedded in that reaction in that moment is that what it's, what's intended to be a gift, now becomes a source of guilt. And the reason that it's a source of guilt is because you are designed to benefit from this gift, but now it's causing, instead of benefit, it's causing cost to you. It's causing difficulty, or hardship or uncertainty. When a gift becomes a source of guilt, it's because we've missed the essence of the gift and the giver. The same reality can be true when it comes to prayer for us. That what God is designed to give to us as a gift can feel like a source of guilt. That we never measure up, that we don't live up to the expectations that God's designed. In fact, if I were to ask you to give yourself a grade when it comes to your prayer life, what would it be? Would it be an A? A C? Maybe for some of you an incomplete? And at the core of that, it's because we feel this sense of guilt that my prayer life isn't what it ought to be. It's not what it should be and we, we often wrestle with why that is. Why do we struggle with prayer? And what we're going to find this morning is as Jesus walks us through this portion of the Sermon on the Mount, He's going to reveal to us two of the primary reasons that we struggle to have a consistent prayer life. And if you want to see a breakthrough in the way that you pray, you need to have a breakthrough in the way that you see God.

So, let's pay attention to each of these realities as they play themselves out. We'll see the first one in the portion of the text we just read, verses 1 through 5. The first reason we struggle to pray is because we question whether God cares enough to answer our prayers. We question whether God cares enough to answer our prayers. So, one of the main reasons we don't pray is because we're not sure that God really cares about our life and our situation. And I've been loving going through this 21 day prayer book with you throughout our time. And if you still haven't gotten a copy, we just got a fresh batch in. If you'll go to our Faith at Home Center after the service, right through these doors and into that room right there where that white front porch is, we've got copies waiting on you. And I just want you to hear from page 103 the way that Jed challenges us about this reality, we struggle to believe God cares for prayer. He says this, "Do you pray throughout the day? Many times, we don't. Most of us are more prone to worry when we encounter the unexpected everyday problems that everyone faces in a broken world. More times than not, others of us get angry when our expectations don't get met. In these moments, we find it more natural to face our problems as if God hasn't promised to be with us. That he doesn't care to help us. Get this, that he died in our place but not help us with our day. We act like atheist. We think like cynics. That's the reason that we don't pray, is because we question whether God cares. And what happens is in this text, Jesus is going to show us that when we're not sure that God actually cares about our prayers, when we doubt that reality, it manifest itself in two different ways in our life. You'll notice in verses one and two that when we doubt whether God cares enough to answer our prayers, it shows up in a harsh attitude. So, look at the way that this shows up. Speaking here in Matthew 7:1, judge not that you be not judged. If you were to think about the most popular verse in in the Bible, right here in the Bible belt in Texas,

it's probably John 3:16. But I would say a close runner up is right here in Matthew 7:1 because it's everybody's trump card when they feel condemned by somebody else. Judge not, lest you be judged. And the irony of it is we live in a culture that's built on judgment: Amazon reviews, Yelp ratings, the number of Instagram likes, swiping across Tinder. Each one of those is a judgement. It's a statement. We live in a culture where judgment is central and yet we ourselves don't want to be judged. And we feel that even more acutely in the church. That the criticism of Christians can be that we are too judgmental. That we're not opened others. That we consider ourselves better than others rather than considering others better than ourselves. And what Jesus is reminding us of is when we doubt that God cares enough about our life to answer our prayer, what can happen is it causes us to respond in this harsh attitude of judgmentalism. Where we put ourselves at the center of our lives. And the root issue about this pull towards harsh attitude is that when we think God doesn't care about our situation, we start to care about it too much. And when we when we think that he doesn't see our problems, we start to focus on our problems too much. And when we wonder if He's going to bring judgement on the earth, what we do is we respond to that by bringing judgement upon it ourselves. So, the root issue here is not just your disposition but your doubt. That you question whether God cares enough to move in your life. It shows up first in that harsh attitude.

But let's keep going because in verses 3 through 5, we see that when we doubt whether or not God cares enough to answer our prayers, it also shows up in our hypocritical actions. So, look at the way he's talking about this reality. If judgmentalism is about how we see others, hypocrisy is about how we are seen by others. It begins talk about the speck in your brother's eye, the log in your own eye and as he's making this differential, he's pointing to a deeper problem. That we're more concerned about the problems in others than we are concerned about the problems in us. We, we magnify the weaknesses of others and we mask the weaknesses in ourselves. That's what hypocrisy is. And so, you look at the way this crescendos in verse 5.

<sup>5</sup>You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

Did you know that word hypocrite? It comes from, during that time period, the theater system in ancient Greece. And so in order for actors to play multiple parts and to carry out the play, what some of them would do is they would wear masks whenever they portrayed a character. And the word to describe an actor wearing a mask in the Greek theater is the word that we get our word hypocrite from. One who puts on a mask, puts on a front, pretends as if they are something else in order to portray themselves to others in a way that doesn't match reality. And that's a warning that Jesus is giving to us. That on our own, in our flesh, we are pulled in the same way. That we want to put on that mask, put on that front, pretend as if we are something else, and the reason for that is because when we doubt that God cares enough to move in our life, we feel as if we've

gotta take matters into our own hands. If He's not going to move, then we have to mask. It feels as if the only option that we have is that of hypocrisy. So, rather than praying, we respond by pretending. That's what Jesus is showing us here and it's so fitting that we think about this pull towards hypocrisy right here on Palm Sunday. Because you remember what happened on that day. When Jesus makes that triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the crowds around Him are waving palm branches. They're laying their garments on the ground and they're shouting, "Hosanna, in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. There's this affirmation. The King is here at last. But what we know is just a few days later, the same city that celebrates Him as a king, condemns Him as a criminal. The Hosannas turn into harshness. And what we find at the core of that is the type of hypocrisy that Jesus is condemning here. That what is said with our mouths doesn't match our hearts.

And this weekend with all the activities of family, we can go on around Texas A&M. It was a Aggie sports lovers paradise. So, you had a Texas two step. You could go over to the Aggie football game for a while and then slide over to the baseball game. And with Cami out of town this weekend for her high school reunion, it's been a bachelor weekend for me and the boys. So, we did the double dip and did football and then baseball. And for a little while, we went out to the playground that's there at Bluebell Park. One of the things I noticed about all the parents that were out there, especially the ones that had young kids is you could see a moment of solace in the midst of chaos. That they could finally turn their attention to the game and watch and focus on it and let the kid do their thing knowing that they're in a safe environment that's entertaining themselves. In other words, those parents, whether directly or indirectly, are communicating to me, to the those young kids, unless you desperately need something significant, leave me alone. You enjoy your thing while I enjoy mine. I need some space here. In other words, they're communicating that moment, unless it's significant I care more about the game than I do about you. And I wonder how often we see God the Father in the same way. Have you thought about that? Now, when the big things are going on in life, I know I can turn to Him. I know He cares. I know He'll respond. But in these small moments, these little issues, these seemingly insignificant things, does it even matter? Does He see? Does He know? Does He care? And at the core of that is it's a doubt in the belief that God can do anything. We've been talking about these four principles for life-changing prayer over the last few weeks. One of which is believing that God can do anything. Well, guess what? If we don't think He cares, how can we believe that he can work in our lives? And so we take matters into our own hands through our harsh attitude and through our hard hearts and through our hypocritical actions instead of turning over the reality that God cares more about our lives than we ever could. And He is working to bring about that good and He is committed to us no matter what is going on in our lives. And that speaks right into what we're going to see in the second part of this passage.

If you look down with me in verse 7, the second thing that I want you to notice about why we struggle to pray is that we struggle to pray when we question whether God is committed enough to answer our prayers. We don't just His care, we question His commitment. And look at the way that Jesus speaks about this beginning in verse 7 when He says,

<sup>7</sup>“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>8</sup>For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and the one who knocks it will be opened. <sup>9</sup>Or which one of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? <sup>10</sup>Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? <sup>11</sup>If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

We live in a world that struggles with commitment. You ever had friends make plans with you and break them at the last minute? You ever been out on a great first date with somebody and then they ghost you afterwards? You ever hired that new coworker who comes in and crushes it for the first month and then disappears and takes another job? Have you or someone you're close to had a mom or a dad who was there with you for a season but when things got hard in your family, they walked away? We know what it's like to see commitments fail and be broken. And the challenge is when you find yourself in a recurring pattern where you give yourself away only to be taken advantage of by the other person, they break their commitment. Guess what starts happening? You no longer give yourself away. You no longer commit yourself to them because you're worried, you're going to get burned again. That you're going to be hurt, that they won't follow through on their commitment. And I can't help but wonder this morning, that shows up in the way we think about God. That we question His commitment to us. Is He truly all in with us? Now, look, we would never say that, of course, we know God's committed to us. But when we struggle to pray, when we struggle to bring our problems and our plans and our desire for provision to God, at the heart of that is the revelation that we're questioning whether He is truly committed to us. And that's what Jesus is speaking to here in Matthew 7. Our lack of prayer proves that reality and the reason for that is as our book has been showing us over the last two weeks, pride doesn't pray. We think we're more committed to our life and our circumstances than God is. And so we set aside our need to pray in order to pursue our commitment to our own life on our own. And in that moment, when we feel that doubt about God's commitment, Jesus is speaking to us and He is saying that that should be, there's nothing further from the truth. He says, God is deeply committed to you and that commitment shows up and at least two ways.

You'll notice the first one there in verses 7 and 8. Jesus is reminding us that God is committed to our needs. That's why He says asking you will receive. Seek and you will find. Knock and the will be open to you. He's saying that God delights in hearing the desires of His people. He

wants to come, wants you to come to Him in childlike dependence in the same way a father in his best moments delights to hear what their child wants or a grandfather in every moment delights to hear what that child wants. Grandpa can I have this? Dad can I have that? That isn't a source of frustration when they're at their best. It is a moment of delight because they respond to that dependence and a commitment to meeting those needs. That's one of the reasons I want to challenge you even now as we're working through this to be writing down something on your prayer card. Just look at those blank lines for a moment and ask God to give you the desires of your heart. To meet the needs that you have. To write those down on there. Whether it's a request or a prayer and let me tell you why. It's because we have watched over the last 21 days God's commitment to meeting the needs of our people. There's just been amazing answered prayer has gone on that have come in through these cards. And there's a few that I want to share with you. So, one man wrote in and said to us that God answered his family's prayer. His wife has been struggling with chronic pain for years and as they've been praying about it over these last few weeks, she's been pain free for weeks now. For the longest stretch she's had in years. God is committed to their needs. Or there was another family who, you know it's tax season and they're getting ready to pay their taxes, and they were going in to meet with their CPA. And they had the expectation they were going to have to pay \$10,000 in taxes. But yet they prayed that God would make it where their tax bill was lower so that instead they could use that money for kingdom purposes instead. And when they walked into that tax accountant meeting expecting to pay \$10,000, they walked out learning that they had to pay zero. I'm thinking to myself, I want to know what your prayer life or who your accountant is because that didn't happen in my world this tax season. God was committed to meeting their needs. And now they're praying through how to redeploy. Or here's another one. We had a family that went through a miscarriage about six months ago and this past week would have been the due date for that child that they lost. You can imagine all the grief in the morning that that would bring about and for weeks, perhaps even months, they've been praying that God would bring them another pregnancy, and a healthy baby in the future. And on the exact week that they were mourning the loss of their first child due to this miscarriage, on the week of their due date they got a positive pregnancy test. God heard their desires. He saw their need and He met it. And that's what Jesus is showing us here. Is that we can pray in faith. We can pursue God with our needs because He delights to hear the desires of our people. He is committed even more than we are to meeting our needs.

But I want you to notice the second half of this down in verse 9. It's also a showing us that God is committed to our good. Not just to our needs but to our good. And so He turns there and you look back at verses 9 and 10. He raises these rhetorical questions. He says:

<sup>9</sup>Which one of you, if a son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? <sup>10</sup>Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent?



Or maybe if you wanted to put it in the modern translation, which one of you, if your son asks him for Doctor Pepper, would give him Mister Pib. Nobody does that. Why? It's because a loving father is working for the good of their children. He's saying, if you as earthly parents, can see the needs of your children and be committed to meeting them for their good, how much more so your heavenly Father? He will do that for us. That's why down in verse 11, he exactly expresses that.

<sup>11</sup>If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

In other words, God is hardwired to work for your good. And that's good news in a broken world, isn't it? But we need to be careful with that reality, because it's not as if this passage is portraying God as some sort of cosmic Santa Claus that when you ask it, you got a blank check to get what you want. See, he not only is committed to our needs but also to our good. And what that means is sometimes, when we bring our needs to God, He doesn't give us what we want but he give us what we truly need. He doesn't give us what we think is best but what He knows is best. Look at verse 11. It tells us there,

<sup>11</sup>Your Father who is in heaven will give good things to those who ask

You do not have because you do not ask. And if we need to be convinced of this reality that God is committed to our good, this is the perfect week to be reflecting on this. Because right here on Palm Sunday, we're starting this Holy Week march towards the resurrection Sunday of Easter. And if you need any proof that God is committed to our good regardless of the cost, no matter what it takes, Holy Week puts that on display. I mean, think about it. Jesus comes into Jerusalem as a triumphant king. The first act that carries out upon entering the city is to cleanse the temple as a priest and it seems as if finally, the promises of God are coming to their fulfillment for the people of God. And then, just a few days later, everything's changed. He is falsely accused. Judgmental hearts and hypocritical actions show up in a way that leads him to be arrested. He is beaten. He is mocked. He is scorned. He has a crown of thorns thrust on his head. He is nailed to that cross. He is put in that tomb. The, the stone is rolled upon it and it seems as if the promises of God have failed. It looks as if God is not committed to our good. Until what happens? Three days later, up from the grave, He arose. He brought death to death. He has now overcome Satan and sin in the deepest darkness in our hearts. That's the kind of commitment to goodness that the Father has expressed to us through the Son. And so I don't know what valley of the shadow of death you're walking through this morning, but I do know He's with you and He is for you. Not only defeating the grave but the Bible tells us He is now seated at the right hand of the Father. Ruling and reigning over this world. Bringing about the

victory He has already secured through His death and resurrection. But He's not just ruling and reigning, He is also praying for you and for me. The Bible tells us that Jesus intercedes on our behalf that the, the spirit prays on our behalf. That's one of the reasons I loved a quote that Jed drew out in the book this week from the Scottish pastor from several centuries ago, Robert Murray McShane. Listen to how McShane says it. As we get ready to turn our hearts to this time of corporate prayer, he says, if I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies. Yet distance makes no difference, He is praying for me. Right now, Jesus is praying for you because God cares for you, because God's committed to you. And for that exact reason, that's why I want us to take time together to pray corporately.

If you weren't with us on Wednesday night, here's what that looked like. We, in just a moment, are going to do the same thing we did there. I'm going to share a category of people that we want to pray over and as I describe these, I hope you're writing down your prayer requests or looking at it to see which of these categories it might fit. And I'm asking you to take a step of faith in front of hundreds of people in here, many of whom you don't know. That if you fit one of these categories, we want to pray for you in this moment. And we're going to ask you to stand up right where you're seated so that we can pray over you in that time. And what's going to happen is as people stand, the rest of us who are seated, I'm going to ask you to extend a hand towards them in a show of support and to pray for them in that moment, out loud, all together at the same time. And then as you have a time to pray, I'm going to close us out with that prayer and move to the next category. Here's the first group we want to pray for this morning and I expect many of you will fit this category and stand up. I'll be standing for this group as well. I want to pray over those of you who either on your card or in your heart feel a burden to pray for the salvation of someone you're close to. If you're praying right now in this season that God would save a loved one, maybe a mother or a father, a son, or a daughter, or a grandchild. Maybe a neighbor, or a coworker or somebody that you're close to, I'd like to invite you to stand right now so that we can pray for those people in your life that don't yet know Jesus. And just think about it, this Easter, oftentimes during these holidays, people are more open to the Gospel than any other time. And I want to challenge you to invite them into the life of our church next Sunday so that they can hear the truth of the resurrection. And if you're seated, I'd like to invite you to extend a hand towards those that are standing. If you're standing, I want to invite you to extend a hand towards somebody else in this moment. And I just want to ask you right now, where you're seated to pray out loud over those around them asking that God will work the hearts of these men and women that you don't know. Let's pray out loud together right now in this time.

Father in heaven, we know there's a lost and dying world around us. That so many of them are people that we hold dear, who have been blinded in their minds and hearts by the god of this world. And we pray that this Easter season, Lord, that you would lift the veil, that You would

replace the heart of stone with the heart of flesh, that You would rescue them from the domain of darkness and transfer them into the kingdom of light. And I pray for these men and women who feel burdened enough that they're willing to stand, that you would use them as a vessel to be a light for Your truth in the hearts of these men and women that we might see many of them come to salvation in Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Well as you're seated back down, here's the second group I want to pray for together. I want to pray over those of you who need prayer for comfort or healing in this season of your life. So, that might show up in any number of ways when it comes to comfort. Maybe you're seeking a sense of supernatural peace. Your life feels it's like it's an upheaval or you're in a difficult season. You might be grieving the loss of a loved one or the ending of a chapter in your life. Or maybe you're grappling with anxiety and you just need the peace of God in the middle of that. If you're looking for that comfort, we want to pray for you. But we also want to for those of you that are in need of healing or that have close loved ones in your life who are need of healing. That could be physical healing. Maybe for that cancer or that heart condition or that ailment that's troubling you. But it also might be in different ways. Maybe you're wrestling with mental health issues right now and struggling with depression or PTSD or just feel a sense of brokenness in your spirit, in your emotions, and you desire for the great physician to work in your life. If you're someone in the room, in need of prayer for comfort or healing, I want to invite you to stand up just like those who did before so we can pray over you. Let's stand right now if that fits you. And in the same way that we prayed over those in the first category. I want to invite you to extend your hands towards these amazing people and to pray for God's comfort and healing in their lives right now. Will you pray out loud? Let's go.

Father, we lift up these men and women to you. Lord, we know that your word tells us You're the God of all comfort. That You're the Prince of Peace. That in your hands is healing because You are the great physician. And I pray for them or for the loved ones that they're lifting up, that You would work in this time to bring about peace. To bring about comfort. To bring about restoration of their mind, or their body, or their spirit. That You would return them to the shalom that we lost in our sin. And we could find that sense of peace in Christ alone. We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

Our last group that we want to pray for. I want to pray over those of you who need a breakthrough from God right now in your life. And maybe that shows up in a couple of different ways. Maybe that's you need a breakthrough when it comes to provision or maybe it's a breakthrough that you need when it comes to freedom from a besetting sin in your life. And so maybe in this moment, you've been praying that God would create a breakthrough for you when it comes to meeting your needs. You're at a crossroads in your life with your job or with your

housing situation or with your finances or maybe with that sense of feeling stuck and you lack clarity about what it is that God wants you to do and you're praying for that kind of breakthrough. We want to pray over you. But we also want to pray for those of you that are wrestling with a sin struggle right now and this maybe The boldest steps somebody has to take today is to be willing to say, I'm in need of victory that may only come through God's power through prayer. And so that sin struggle could show up in any number of ways. Maybe that's a selfishness or a self-centeredness where you're looking to yourself in pride rather than to God. Or maybe you've, when we talk about that harsh spirit or those hypocritical actions, you see that in your own life and you desire prayer. Maybe that short fuse and that struggling with anger is what's burdening you today or perhaps it's that addiction that you've been hiding from others or that sexual sin that nobody knows about but God. If you're in need of a breakthrough today, whether it's for provision or for deliverance, I want to invite you to stand right now so that we can pray over you in this moment. Let's stand now. Anybody else want to join us here? There's so many standing in this moment. We want to pray over you. Let's extend our hands towards these brothers and sisters. And one more time, I want to invite you to pray out loud over them in this moment. Let's pray together.

Father, we come to you pleading on behalf of these men and women. Lord, we don't know the situation they find themselves in but what we do know is that everywhere they've turned, as they've looked to their own strength or their own devices, they have not found the breakthrough that they need, God. So, in this moment, we are crying out on behalf of our brothers and sisters that You would give the breakthrough that they need. That You would provide for them, that You would deliver them, that You would set them free from the anxiety or the besetting sin and let them walk in newness of life. Let them press on in the days ahead walking in the freedom that can only be found in Christ and in His provision for their life. And we pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.