



November Sermon Series: Dangerous Prayers

Message #1: Search Me

Getting the Nod

Video: Dangerous Prayers #1

Today, I want to talk to you about praying dangerously. Today's message on prayer is going to...

- Separate the men from the boys and the women from the girls.
- The prayers I'm going to suggest today are not for the faint of heart.
- You see, these prayers are not for whimps.
- It's for people that have firm spiritual resolve. It's for people that dare to go deeper in their walk with God.

So, if you thought you could get away with simple mealtime, bedtime, business as usual prayers... Surprise! There's more. **Instead of dog paddling through the shallow end of the pool, we're going to take a plunge in the deep end.** This month I'm going to talk to you in a very challenging way about dangerous and daring prayers.

The Bible we have is chock full of them. Prayer of Jabez; The Lord's Prayer; Jonah's Prayer in the Fish's Belly; Hannah's Prayer Over Her Child; Elijah's Prayer in Front of the Baal Prophets.

You see, the Christian life is not about playing it safe, it's about living life on the edge. And not everybody is going to pray a dangerous prayer. It's about taking a leap of faith even when there's no safety net in place.

You say, **"Pastor Bruce, what do you mean by dangerous prayers, does that mean something really bad is going to happen?"** The answer to that is NO. It doesn't mean lightning is going to strike or the sky is going to fall. **Dangerous prayers are prayers that reach the heart of God. They are dangerous because they dislodge us from our spiritual safety zone and challenge us to live beyond our comfort.** In that sense, dangerous is not bad, but necessary for our growth.

So, this morning we are going to take a little tour through scripture and examine a dangerous prayer found in the Bible. **Dangerous prayers are prayed by ordinary people just like you and me.** You see, prayer is for everybody, not just for a select few or the spiritually elite. As followers of Christ we are called to be people of prayer. **You and I have this awesome privilege; we can pray to the Lord anywhere, anytime. It's a privilege that none of us should take for granted. So, whether you're a seasoned expert or just a beginner, take heart God's anxious to hear from you.**

Transition:

Connecting Us

Today's prayer is found in Psalm 139... **SEARCH ME.**

NKJV | Ps 139:23-24 **Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties... and see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.**

These two verses come from King David in the O.T. The psalm has four strophes of six verses each. The message progresses significantly from one subject to another...

- **His first meditation is on God's knowledge and Control**, that every aspect of his life was searched out and controlled by what the Lord knew.
- **He then realized it was impossible to escape from that control**, no matter how far or fast he might go, for God is everywhere. David then stated that...
- **God has control over him and has planned his life with great care.** On the basis of these meditations,
- **David then affirms his loyalty to God and prays for God to examine him.**

The bottom Line??? **SEARCH ME!** There are dozens of dangerous prayers in scripture, not the least of which is this one. **I mean this one really stands out. And it takes guts to pray this prayer and mean it.**

Object Lesson with a Flashlight: Today's dangerous prayer is symbolized by a physical object... a flashlight.

The object I have to help you identify with this point is a flashlight. You can take it camping, I've used here at Church, and at home, sometimes to work on the car. In my attic I have had to fix things... find things... and organize things with very little light available. So, in order for me to accomplish things related to our attic... I need this flashlight.

A flashlight is primarily used to help us find things in the dark. **We need a flashlight to help expose whatever it is we are looking for.** We've all been in dark places before... and found ourselves in dark places where there is little light. Without a flashlight I would be stumbling around in the dark. A flashlight is a dear to life necessity.

Now here's the spiritual application. **When we pray, Lord, SEARCH ME. We're praying for the God of heaven to flash the light of His brilliant holiness into the inner recesses of our soul and expose whatever's in there. We're saying God, "Shine the spotlight of your Grace into my life, and if there's anything in there that shouldn't be in there, expose it." If there's a pocket of resistance, a stubborn way, or a sinful habit. Expose it with your light and get it out in the open.**

Transition: David actually gave us an inventory... **a list of things that we give God permission to do in us... things that we tell God to reveal to us ...so He can do something through us.**

What's God's Take on This?

The Courageous Inventory of a Life Pursuing God:

1. **Check my heart** (Jeremiah 17:9)
 - NLT | Je 17:9 **"The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?"** (It is the center of our morals and integrity)
 - **What is the true desire of your heart?** NLT | Mt 6:21 **Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.** If what you treasure most is of this world... God cannot be Lord of your life.
 - **NLT | Mt 22:37 Jesus replied, " 'You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.'**

- **The heart of man's problem is the problem of man's heart.** That's where the landmines of life are found.

2. **Expose my fears** (Proverbs 3:5-6 / Hebrews 11:6)
 - **What makes you most afraid?** Fear is what creates spiritual amnesia. It dulls our memories of miracles... it makes us forget what Jesus has done... and it blinds us to how good God is!!!
 - **What we fear the most reveals where we trust God the least.**
 - **Illustration of My Personal Fears:** Failure and letting people down.
 - Fear may fill the world... but it doesn't have to fill our hearts! So, feed your faith... and your fears will starve.
 - **So, learn to memorize or retain the Word of God!!!**
 - **NLT | Heb 11:6 And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.**
 - **NLT | Proverbs 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. 6 Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.**
3. **Illuminate my sins**(Matthew 7:3)
 - **What is it that is inconsistent in your life with God's Word?** Anything displeasing to God. It is asking God to reveal the...
 - **Respectable and disrespectful sins**
 - **Delectable sins**
 - **Neglectful sins**
 - **Hurtful sins**
 - **The Wrestle sins**
 - **Where are you most defensive????**
 - **Watch what you accuse and yet excuse in your own life.**
 - **NLT | Mt 7:3 "And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own?"**
 - **It takes courage to pray this prayer!!**
4. **Check my pathways** (The Way of Everlasting...)
 - **What decisions are made without God in the room?** (Relationships; compromises; temptations; in dark places...)
 - **Let God handle what's behind you and keep moving forward in what He has ahead of you.**
 - **NLT | Ga 6:1 Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself.**

Transition:

Takeaways

Anchor Prayers:

1. **Anchor my heart to His heart.** See what scripture tells us about what is passionate about.

2. **Anchor my faith to His Motives.** This means to believe in a God who is good and faithful.
3. **Anchor my permission to His flashlight.** Giving God all the keys to every room of your life.

Drawing the Net

Final Illustration: When I was in college, I prayed this prayer of David's. I prayed it this way, "Search me and show me what you see!" After about 48 hours I begged God to stop showing me. I began to see things that I had never seen before... and I began to pray differently in an overwhelming and humbling way toward a God who could love me.

Like a messy garage or a cluttered closet... we all have to de-clutter our lives and get back to making the main thing... the main thing.

Do you want to pray about this?