

WATCH AND PRAY WITH ME

David Baker, Presbytery Word for week commencing Sunday 29 June 2025
Transcription of recording, slightly edited

Good morning. What I am wanting to do today is slow up a little bit and come back and look at the preface or begin to look at the preface of the book called 'The Overcoming Church'. You will know that the preface is called *Watch and Pray*. This is certainly a big part of what the Lord is saying to us in this season. We are being called to watch and to pray. When the Lord says to us, 'Watch', He is saying, 'Be illuminated'. Remember that 'watch' equals 'wake up' and 'stay awake'.

The Lord is calling us to wake up - to be illuminated concerning what the Holy Spirit is saying to the churches and saying to each one of us in this season. Having been illuminated, we are to stay awake and then, by the Spirit join a fellowship of prayer. It is not just *watch*; it is *watch and pray*. Jesus is saying to us, 'Watch and pray *with Me*.' Do not start your own prayer meeting in the flesh; hear what He is saying to us - which is 'Watch and pray with Me.' That is what He was saying to the disciples in the garden of Gethsemane. They thought He was just saying 'watch and pray' so they are desperately trying to do that in the flesh and of course they fall asleep for sorrow because it is not possible to do that. Christ is saying, 'Watch and pray *with Me*.'

We are joining the fellowship of *His* prayer. That is the fellowship of *His* intercession; and it is the intercession of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit from before the foundation of the world when they discussed the name of every son of God. It is also then the fellowship of Their travail. The *intercession* is the discussion, and the *travail* is the offering of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit which brought (or fulfilled) Their covenant purpose - the thing that they discussed. It is intercession and then it is travail.

Christ is saying, 'Watch and pray with Me.' By the Spirit we are joining the fellowship of

His intercession and His travail. The travail of Christ then continues for His entire offering journey. It is the fellowship of those seven wounding events where we see the one Seed multiplying to bring forth many seeds.

The Lord is saying to us, 'Watch and pray' and 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.' I like to think of that both ways: that it is that my spirit is willing because I am hearing that word and I am choosing, but then I have no capacity to be obedient. At the same time, *the* Holy Spirit is standing by, ready, willing and able to help me to connect me to that fellowship. I am appreciating the ministry today of being filled with the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit is our Helper.

In many respects this is the beginning of being bankrupt in spirit, as we recognise that we have no capacity in ourselves to join that fellowship. We know we are being invited to join the fellowship, but we have no capacity ourselves to join the fellowship. Right there, that is where the Holy Spirit helps in our weakness because we do not know how to pray as we ought. Rom 8:26. That is introducing today, and I am going to keep talking around the point.

Let us turn to Matthew chapter 6 verse 6. This is Jesus speaking to the disciples about prayer. I am going to look at the Lord's prayer, but we are only just going to begin today. This will take us some time. Once you start looking at the Lord's prayer, almost every component is a sermon in itself. Let us read from verse 6. These are Jesus's preliminary comments concerning prayer. He says, 'But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.'

Now let us just go slowly. Jesus begins 'When you pray...' Can I ask a very basic question

here as we begin? When do you pray? We have been talking about all these things with the teenagers. When it comes to the fellowship of the *agape* meal this morning, I am hoping that the teenagers can be very helpful contributors. For all the adults, if you have any questions concerning the Lord's prayer, you can ask the teenagers, and I am sure they will be very happy to help you this morning and to exhort you to this fellowship of prayer.

The first point though is when you pray. So when *do* you pray? This is talking about gathering together corporately to pray and we need to know when we do that. This is part of the four foundations of the fellowship of the church - the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer. Act 2:42. We gather together to pray, and we sanctify time to do that.

Following on from that, we are then individually, as sons of God, sanctifying time in our day to pray. We are not just praying on the run, multitasking all the time, all in the name of I am 'praying at all times', but never actually drawing aside to specifically pray and wait on the Lord and meet Him. In the end, I do not think the Lord wants to be part of our multitasking culture. Prayer needs to be our top priority. Again, we have been exhorting the teenagers that Jesus said, 'Seek first the kingdom of God.' Mat 6:33. This is the first thing you do in your day. When you wake up in the morning, this is the top priority. The Lord wants to meet you. You are getting out of bed in the morning and by the Spirit meeting Him. 'Seek first the kingdom of God.' This is before anything else. This is our top priority. We are sons of God, and we are meeting our heavenly Father.

When it says, 'Seek first the kingdom of God', it is talking about the fellowship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The kingdom of God in the first case has three Citizens - the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We have been given the tremendous privilege as sons

of God of joining that fellowship. We seek first the kingdom. That is the fellowship; then His righteousness. Now what is the righteousness of God? The righteousness of God is who He has called you to be as a son of God. That is the righteousness that is being revealed day by day from faith to faith as you live as a son of God in this world. Your number one priority when you wake up in the morning is to meet the Lord and join the fellowship. That is the first purpose of prayer. We are joining a pre-existing fellowship - a fellowship that is already happening. We are not initiating it; we are joining it. We are not bursting in through the door to let God know all our good ideas. We are coming onto holy ground, taking our shoes off (I will comment a bit more on that in a moment). We are *joining* a fellowship, and then we are seeking first that fellowship. Then there is 'His righteousness', which is how am I to live as a son of God today? What is the work that Christ has already completed for me? The works prepared from before the foundation of the world that Jesus Christ has fully completed on His offering journey for me, what does that look like today? That is my number one priority.

Then Jesus says, '... and all these other things will be added unto you'. Mat 6:33. Now when He says that, He is talking about your real needs. It is as basic as what you will eat, what you will drink, what you will wear. Now it does not get any more basic than that. Jesus is saying that is not your priority. The Father knows that you need all those things. You 'seek first the kingdom and His righteousness (which is, 'How do I live as a son of God today by the Spirit?'), and all these other things will be added to you.' God the Father knows what you need.

'When you pray' - Jesus is assuming that we do. That is a good question to begin with. When do you practically set aside time every morning (first thing in the morning) to pray?

‘When you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut the door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.’ That word ‘into your room’... (I am going to talk a bit more about this), in the Old King James that word is translated ‘closet’. This is where we get the term the ‘prayer closet’ from. I think this is probably going to be a generational thing. I will not ask for a show of hands. Who is familiar with that term, the prayer closet?

Let us think about this. We know Jesus is not saying you need to go into your bedroom and then part the clothes in the cupboard and then get in behind there or find the most private place you possibly can and that is going to be the most holy, sanctified place for you to pray. He is not talking about that. How do we know He is not talking about that? I am just thinking very basically today. It is good to be praying without distraction; we know that. But that is not Jesus’s primary point here. We know He is not talking about a room that is just a private location, because He is saying the Father dwells in the secret place. We have just read that. We sometimes miss that. We think, ‘All right, I am finding a secret place and then the Father, who sees me in the secret place, will reward me openly.’ It is not saying that firstly. It is saying the Father Himself is in the secret place.

If the Father is in the secret place, that means the secret place is the house of God. Let us go slowly. If He dwells there, we are talking about the Father’s house - the house of God. Another word for the secret place (or the house of God) is ‘the secret place of His tabernacle’ - where the Father lives. This is Psalm 27 verse 5, ‘For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock.’

Where does God live? God lives, not in your cupboard, right? I am thinking very practically. God lives in heaven. This is part

of the Lord’s prayer, ‘Our Father who is in heaven’. Let us go very slowly. Where do *you* live? Thinking very practically, I know where I woke up this morning. It is here on earth. I have a mortal, physical body with all its constraints and limitations. I am subject to time and space and matter and all these things. The Father lives in heaven. We are talking about a fellowship in the first case, which is before time, outside of time and eternity, not subject to any of the constraints that belong to this material universe, and I am being asked to join that - to join that fellowship. What do I need? I need a ladder. Something that connects heaven and earth. I am going very slowly. The secret place of the ladder.

This is what Jacob saw. Let us picture Jacob. He is sent from his house and his family. Esau is trying to kill him and so he is sent away for his own sake. The Lord had a work to do in Jacob to change his nature from being a deceiver to receiving the name Israel - one who ruled with God. When he is starting his journey, he is being sent away, and he gets to a certain place, and he finds a rock. He is tired and he puts his head down on that - not the most comfortable pillow, but that is what he has. He puts his head down on that rock and he falls asleep - and what does he see? He sees a ladder and the ladder stretches from heaven to earth. Then he sees the Lord above the ladder, and the Lord is speaking to him and He is reaffirming to him the promise that He had made to Abraham... (his grandfather Abraham, who had long passed away by this stage)... the Lord is reaffirming the promise to him. We know that promise is ‘In your seed, all the families of the earth will be blessed.’ The Lord is also saying to him, ‘Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.’ Gen 28:15.

Now that is a wonderful promise. This is the same as the Lord saying, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you. I am with you on this journey.' Verse 16: 'Then Jacob awoke from his sleep.' Can we register this? This is a big part of awake from sleep. 'Then Jacob awoke from his sleep.' It is not just saying he fell asleep on the rock and then he has the dream and then he wakes up. That *is* what happened. But Jacob is awaking from a slumber that he had been in for the first 70 years of his life. He was seeing something completely new - awaking from sleep. He is illuminated by the Lord to see something. He awakes from his sleep, and he says, 'Surely the Lord is in this place.' He is discovering the house of God - where the Lord lives.

He is in a random place - just a patch of dirt somewhere; but then he sees the house of God. He says, 'Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it. I did not know this before.' I like this. He has discovered a secret place: 'Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it. Now I know it. I have discovered a secret.' Verse 17: 'And he was afraid...' This is where he receives the fear of God. The fear of God goes with him on the whole journey. If he did not fear God, then he would not have actually continued to walk with the Lord, and the Lord would not have been able to achieve what He achieved in his life. But he *does* receive the fear of God here. '... and he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place!" [We are talking about a place] This is none other than the house of God, [just very practically where God lives] and this is the gate [or the door] of heaven!'

Which heaven are we talking about? We know it is the third heaven, which is the top of Mount Zion. We are not talking about the physical creation - the first heaven, the stars in the sky. We are not talking about the second heaven - the angelic administration. We are talking about the third heaven which is Mount Zion, which is the place of the Son's throne. That was established right at the

beginning of the Everlasting Covenant when the Father said to the Son, 'Today you are My Son, today I have begotten You.' It is established by the word of the Father and immediately the Father installed the Son as the King on Mount Zion. It is the place of the Son's throne.

The ladder is reaching right up to there. I am thinking pictorially here. I will throw in another few thoughts. What kind of ladder are you picturing in your mind? Think very practically. Is it the sort of ladder you go down to Bunnings to buy — one that folds up? It is going to need a few folds to get all the way from earth to heaven. We are not talking about that kind of ladder. I picture that a bit innately. Then you are wondering about the angels ascending and descending. Jacob saw that as well. He sees the ladder; the Lord is above it speaking, and then the angels are ascending and descending upon the ladder. If you bought your ladder from Bunnings, you are wondering whether the angels are bumping into each other as they go up and down. Maybe you have never thought of that before in your life, but that is my pictorial thinking. Are they are going up on one side and down on the other, or are they saying, 'Excuse me', or 'What is happening here?'

Let us think a bit differently. When you are looking in the book of Ezekiel, the ladder is actually a wheel - high and awesome - a wheel which is ascending and descending. That is the other way of thinking about this ladder. Equally, the word ladder here literally means 'a staircase'. This is the secret place of the stairs. The Song of Solomon uses that phrase, 'the secret place of the stairs'. We are also thinking about a mountain - a great and high mountain which is Mount Zion. Right on the top of the mountain is the third heaven, where the temple is on the sides of the north. In that temple is the throne of the Son. You have the secret place of the stairs (or the secret place of the cliff) making their

way up the cliff face all the way to the top of the mountain. Whatever picture we are using (or illustration), we are talking about the connection of heaven and earth. The ladder extends beyond the third heaven because, as I said before, it is actually extending back to the fellowship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit from before, which is outside of time and eternity. That is the beginning of the secret place in heaven. We just need to define it. What does it look like in heaven and then what does it look like on earth? There is a connection between the two.

Let us just start with *heaven*. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit, before the foundation of the world, talked about *you* and the secret of your name. As the psalmist says, 'How vast is the sum of your thoughts concerning me - who I am as a son of God and what you have planned for me, not only in this lifetime, but also for the age to come in the new heavens and the new earth.' Psa 139:17. They are not bound by time, so They can take as long as They like in that sense to discuss every detail about you. 'Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man everything that God has prepared for those who love Him.' 1Co 2:9. That is the secret of you as a son of God. That is where we have to begin in terms of considering the secret place. It is the secret of your name.

Of course, all those names were committed to Yahweh the Son who emptied Himself and was begotten then as the Son of God. They are all committed to Him. He is the one Seed. He is the Fruit of Their offering from before the foundation of the world. We have no ladder yet. We are watching the offering of the Son; He becomes the Son of God and His throne is established on the top of Mount Zion. But there is still no ladder. There is an unbridgeable gap until the Son of God then further empties Himself and humbles Himself all the way to be born in the womb of the virgin Mary as the Son of God in the flesh and the Son of Abraham, the Son of

David. He is born as the Son of Man there. We are looking at His earthly ministry. He is ministering as the Son of God. Of course, every miracle that He performed was an obedience to the Father. He is fully revealing the Father's name. Every miracle was a good work that the Father had given Him to do, and He is overcoming the temptation to be the source in any way of His own name and works. He is revealing the Father. We then get up to just before His offering journey in John chapter 12 verses 23 to 24. He says, 'Now the time has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Unless a grain of wheat goes into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it goes into the ground and dies, it brings forth much fruit [or brings forth many seeds].'

In the garden of Gethsemane, Christ as the Son of Man was fully joined to us in our fallen, human condition. He fully identified with all our weakness; fully identified with all our sickness; fully identified with all our iniquity. We have this ladder being built and it is being built from heaven down to the earth. Do not think about it starting on the earth and then getting levered up to heaven. It is being built from heaven down. He is fully connected to us. I am going to read a verse here and I love this verse. This is in Psalm 139. I will make a few points on the way through. When the messengers of Christ proclaim the word of God by the Holy Spirit, it is bringing illumination to us so that we know what was predestined for us from before the foundation of the world. This is the secret. We read in Amos 3 verse 7, 'Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants, the prophets.'

As the messengers of Christ proclaim the secret of the Lord to us (the secret of your name as a son of God), they are not proclaiming something which is unattainable, because of this ladder.

Looking here now at the ladder on the *earth*, we know that Christ emptied Himself again in the garden of Gethsemane to be joined to

us in our weakness and death. That is where His physical body became the body of sin. He is continuing to descend on His offering journey while at the same time He is taking our sin all the way out into the sea of God's forgetfulness. At the same time, He is also learning our obedience and fulfilling the works of our sonship.

He is doing this for every son - every son who was discussed before the foundation of the world. This is why He needs to be glorified on this journey as Yahweh the Son, because it is His capacity by Eternal Spirit to be the expression (or the substance) of every son. He is fulfilling our works. As He is fulfilling our works, the name that was predestined for us is becoming substantial. It is becoming substantial through the offering of Christ.

The works that Christ did in the course of His offering journey from Gethsemane to Calvary were the works that belong to the sonship name of every identity brought forth by the Father. I am quoting from the little booklet that we received last week called 'Understanding Offering'. I think this is a most fantastic point. This really stood up for me in neon lights. With this understanding in view, we could describe Christ's seven wounding events as seven 'name-developing steps'. You have a name from before the foundation of the world, but now it has been given substance by the offering of Christ in seven wounding events. He is fulfilling your works, and as He does so (because you cannot separate name and works), He is giving substance to your name forever - everything you will ever do in the new heavens and the new earth.

Let us go to Psalm 139 which is where I was going - on the secret place. I am establishing it in heaven, and we have gone higher than the third heaven - think of it this way. Now we are coming down to the earth, but we are going to go to the lowest parts of the earth. Let us stretch our ladder beyond the third heaven to before. Remember when Moses

was taken up the mountain and hidden in the cleft of the rock, the Lord then revealed His glory to him and proclaimed the name, Yahweh and Yahweh *Elohim* to him. Moses was gathered up there by the Spirit into a fellowship from *before* where his name was discussed. That is the *heights* of the ladder.

Now let us look at the *depths*, because Christ is fully identifying with us as the Son of Man in our weakness, our death. Then in seven wounding events, He is going to the lowest parts of the earth, which is lower than any sin. He is exploring every possibility and bringing it to nothing and taking it out into the sea of God's forgetfulness. But right there, that is where He is forming the substance of our name. We have the ladder going right down to there. There is no one that is below the bottom rung.

I do not want to start mixing all our metaphors in terms of what type of ladder we are talking about. But I am making it clear. It reaches to the depths of the earth and that is where your name was given substance. Now this is Psalm 139 verse 13 which says, 'For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb.' That is talking about your identity as a person. We are not talking in the lowest parts of the earth; we are talking about when the sperm and the egg met and then were implanted in the womb of your mother. You received there an eternal identity. Your spirit, which is your identity (and that is eternal) was brought forth by a physical act of procreation.

God of course is the source of our identity, but our identity does not pre-exist that physical act. That is when you began to be. You did not exist before that. You had a name that was discussed, but you received your identity in the womb of your mother. The psalmist is saying, 'For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. [Verse 14] I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous

are Your works, and that my soul knows very well.'

That is a good place to start concerning your identity, which is eternal. God has given you that and you need to accept that and be happy with that. That is you who is going to be reborn; but you do not get a different identity. That is you. 'I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are your works, and that my soul knows very well. [Verse 15] My frame...' This is an interesting word and some translations use 'bones'. That is not correct and is completely unhelpful. 'Bones' is talking about your physical body which belongs to you. Your physical body - your spirit, soul and body, which is all being formed in your mother's womb. We are talking about something completely different now. It is not your bones. It is much better translated 'substance'. That is the old King James, and I like that one. 'My frame [or my substance] was not hidden from You when I was made in *secret*, and skilfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.'

This is a very obvious point: the lowest parts of the earth are not the same as your mother's womb. The lowest parts of the earth are where Christ descended on His offering journey. We are talking about the cross here. That is where the substance of your *name* was formed. Now this is the bottom of the ladder if you like - the secret place. '...when I was made in secret and skilfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.' Verse 16: 'Your eyes saw my substance...' That is in Christ. 'Your eyes saw my substance.' My name was made substantial through the offering of Christ '... being yet unformed...' For us, we are not even born then. We have not even received our spirit in our mother's womb when Christ made our name substantial through His offering. 'The Father sees my substance in Christ being yet unformed in me' is the way I describe that. 'Your eyes saw my substance [in Christ] being

yet unformed [in me]. And in Your book [that is the Lamb's book of life], they were all written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.'

Now we know that Jesus was then resurrected. Having learned our obedience, fulfilled the works of our sonship, He was resurrected then, as the first Man in the image and likeness of God. He is the end of God's Everlasting Covenant purpose - the first Man in the image and likeness of God. When we are joined to the fellowship of His offering, we are being conformed to that image. That is our hope as sons of God.

I am emphasising the Son of Man here in terms of the ladder. You can see how important the Son of Man, fully connected to us, is. On His offering journey, He learned our obedience and completed the works of our sonship. This is why Jesus said to Nathaniel, 'Hereafter...' 'You think it is amazing that I have proclaimed the secret of your name from before the foundation of the world, but there is something even more remarkable, Nathaniel. After My offering (hereafter), you will see the angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man.' The Son of Man is the ladder. The ladder now is the corporate body of the Son of Man because He did form a corporate body on His offering journey as well. That is John 1 verse 51. 'He said to him [that is Nathaniel], "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you will see heaven open [so this is the gate of heaven], and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." '

Christ was then raised, after His resurrection, to be seated at the right hand of God. He has messengers in His right hand who proclaim the word of God to us. The word reveals the glory of our sonship. We are talking about the secret proclaimed from before, but we can now, by the Spirit, look into the face of Christ and see the glory of whom we have been predestined to become. We are looking into His face like a mirror by the Spirit.

We are seeing the ladder here and the messengers ascending and descending. The word is being proclaimed to us. There is a word being proclaimed, if you like, because Christ has seven stars in His right hand and there is a word being proclaimed from heaven to us. At the same time, we are being invited to join this fellowship. There is an ascending element as well, which is through prayer. The word is proclaimed to us, but then we are invited to join a prayer meeting. As we have said, in the first case, this is a corporate prayer meeting. We are talking about the house of God. There is one secret place, and it is called the 'secret place of His tabernacle'. That is what we are being invited to join. I will not develop this point, but it is very interesting when you look at the tabernacle of Moses and then the temple of Solomon. We know that they were a shadow or a type of the true temple which is the body of Christ. When Jesus went into the temple and He drove the money changers out and He cleansed the temple He said, 'You made My Father's house, which should have been a house of prayer...'. I think of this as the corporate house of God. Jesus said, 'It is written, "My house shall be called a house of prayer [talking corporate house of God firstly], but you have made it a den of thieves."' Mat 21:13.

There are lots of ways we can do that when we are expecting God to do things for us. But it is meant to be a house of prayer. Jesus is quoting from the book of Isaiah. This is speaking about Mount Zion and the true temple. Isaiah 56 verse 7. 'Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on My altar; for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.'

This is what you see from Revelation chapter 4 onwards - the Father's tabernacle when the Father takes His seat on the top of Mount Zion. Christ then stands up from His throne

at the right hand of God and moves the whole administration of His body in and around the Father's throne, and then the seals are opened, and a message goes forth and a great multitude come in. What do they come into? They come into the Father's tabernacle which is a house of prayer for all nations. This is the secret place - the secret place of His tabernacle - corporate first. But then also, all of us individually, as sons of God need to come into our room which is part of that secret place. Jesus says that. He says that there is one secret place. However, we know that Jesus also instructed us to go into our inner room which is inside the secret place. I like 'inner room' here because you are right in. There is one secret place, and you have a place that is right in that secret place - an inner room; not an outer room somewhere on the outside near the wall or something. It is right in the inner place.

Jesus said to the disciples in John 14 verse 2, 'In My Father's house are many mansions.' I am not sure why we get 'mansions' there - just for whatever reason translators like to think of a mansion or something. But it just means 'dwelling place'. 'In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you.' I love how Jesus is communicating this. Of course this is saying that this is true. 'And if it was not true, I would have told you, right?' Know that it is absolutely true. 'In my Father's house are many mansions [or dwelling places]; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.' We know He is saying this at the Last Supper and He is talking about His offering journey to the Father through those seven wounding events. He is preparing a place for us. On His offering journey, Jesus Christ prepared a unique place for every son of God in the fellowship of His body, which is the Father's house. He did this in obedience to the Father's will.

Verse 3 says, 'If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.' We know this verse is often read at funerals, but Jesus is firstly talking about when 'I will come again.' He is talking about the day of His resurrection. He is on a journey to the Father's house and then He is coming again on the day of resurrection to the disciples. This is very easy to establish when you read the Gospel of John. A few verses down in John 14 verse 18, He says, 'I will not leave you... [when He is saying, 'I will come again']... I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me.' This is talking about the day of His resurrection. You will see Me - and they did. They all saw Him in the upper room on the day of resurrection. 'You will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.' You will be born as a son of God.

There is a lot of Scripture on this in John. 'Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, "Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said? 'A little while, you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me?'". Joh 16:19. He has got them confused on this. He is talking about 'a little while, you will not see Me and then a little while you will see Me.' He is wanting to make it very clear. He is talking about the day of resurrection. 'You will see Me again.'

Jesus knew that they wanted to ask about it. Verse 20: 'Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy.' Now the simple point is that He is saying, 'I am going to come again. I am going to be three days and three nights in the tomb. Then on the day of resurrection, I will come again. You will see Me. You will rejoice because that is the day you will be born as sons of God. Because I live, you will live also.' We know

that they were born, all the disciples there in the upper room, as sons of God. Then He is saying, 'And I will receive you to Myself.'

Let us go slowly here. I just love this. 'And I will receive you to Myself.' If Christ is receiving us as sons of God, who is doing the giving? He is not *taking* us; He is *receiving* us. Who is doing the *giving* when Christ says, 'I will receive you to Myself?' It is the Father. The very first thing that happens once we are born as sons of God is that the Father Himself places us into the fellowship of the body of Christ. He is giving us to Christ and Christ is very happily receiving us, so that where He is, we will be also. We have died and our life is now hidden with Christ in God. After we have been born as a son of God, the Father places us in the body of Christ where He has chosen. This is now your inner room in the secret place. This is foundational to all prayer - that we go into that inner room and pray in that place where the Father has placed us in the fellowship of the body of Christ.

Notably, Jesus then says that when we go into the inner room, we need to shut the door. Again, this is not a physical door. As I again humorously think about this, if we are just talking a physical door so that no one can see you, then it was a big misstep by Daniel. He shut his door but forgot to close the windows. That was his undoing. That is not what the Lord is saying. In fact, Daniel did a fantastic job of 'shutting his door' in terms of maintaining his own sanctification as a son of God by continuing to pray with his windows open. He was not the least bit concerned about any of that. When Jesus says you need to shut the door, He was highlighting that it is our responsibility to guard the holy ground of the secret place.

We have one secret place which is the house of God. Then you have been given your inner room in that secret place as a son of God and as a family (as a household) in that secret place. It is your responsibility to shut the

door. Jesus is saying it is our responsibility to guard the holy ground of the secret place. The preliminary to this is that we take our shoes off. Let us just stay pictorially, and hopefully some of these pictures are helpful for the children today. First thing, leave your shoes outside the door - outside. Do not bring your shoes onto the holy ground of the fellowship of Yahweh.

That was the lesson that Moses learnt. When he approached the holy ground of the fellowship of Yahweh, when he sees the burning bush and the Lord speaking to him, the first thing the Lord says is, 'Take your shoes off, Moses. You are standing on holy ground.' What does this mean for us? Jesus explains it. What He is saying is that we must not trample the holy ground of Yahweh by imposing our own carnal agendas and carnal modes of prayer upon the Lord. He specifically identifies two of them. There are many, but Jesus specifically identifies two carnal modes of prayer. This is all preliminary to the Lord's prayer.

We have not even got to the Lord's prayer yet, but He says in Matthew 6 verse 5, 'When you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.'

I am not going to ask for a show of hands, but who is really bursting to go down to the centre of town and pray on the street corner so that you may be seen by men? I am pretty sure there would not be too many who are really wanting to do that. Do we say, 'Okay, well, we ticked that one off; that is not our problem? That was the Pharisees' problem. Certainly not our problem.' Well, hang on. I think we are pretty committed. What he is talking about the Pharisees is that they had a religious projection. That is what it looked like for them. The basic point is they had a religious projection, and they were very committed to maintaining their religious

projection and being seen by men and using prayer to support it. So, question: what does *our* religious projection look like? It certainly does not look like that, but we do have religious projections. We are equally committed to supporting them and maintaining them. Our greatest fear is that we would be exposed. A lot of our prayer can very easily be trampling the holy ground of Yahweh as we come in with our shoes on to say to the Lord, 'This is my projection and this is how I would like You to support my projection, because I want to be seen by men in a certain way.'

Equally then, another one the Lord identifies is in verse seven. 'When you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words.' Our innate carnal response is, 'Well, we just flick that one. We do not do that. We are not into mantras. We are not praying the rosary or something. We are not just saying the same words over and over again.' Well, hang on. Do we? How often are we completely preoccupied with our own needs, or what we believe that we need, or what we believe somebody else needs? And how often do we keep bringing these things and imposing them upon the Lord and repetitively. It may not be the same need, but it is a repetitive mode - my whole prayer is focused on what I perceive I need. That is a vain repetition, completely unhelpful. The Lord does not need to hear all that and does not want to hear all that. In fact, the very next verse says, 'I already know your needs before you ask or think. The genuine ones, I already know them.' 'Therefore do not be like them [that is like the heathen]. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.' We are not repetitively praying this way as sons of God.

The purpose of our prayer: now this is a good question, and the teens asked this question, and it is a really good one. If God already knows our needs before we ask or think, then

why do we pray? What is the purpose of prayer? Good question. Maybe they can answer that for you a bit later today. A good starting point is reminding ourselves that the whole purpose of prayer is *fellowship*. It is fellowship with the Lord. We are not just praying because we need to get something.

More than this, when we are talking about shutting the door, we are talking about guarding and maintaining the sanctification of our own life and our own family. We have been considering this through the course of the year. The Lord spoke to Joshua in relation to the matter of the sin of Achan. They are all on their faces, and Joshua is on his face before the Lord praying. The Lord says to him, 'Get up, sanctify the people.' How are you to sanctify the people? By telling them to sanctify themselves. I think that has been a keynote word for us this year, to recognise that the word of God is proclaimed to us and the word of God that is publicly preached is discerning between the holy and the unholy and the clean and the unclean and what is profane. The word of God is defining that, but it is our personal responsibility and accountability in terms of how we respond to that word. Our sanctification is our accountability before Christ and the Lord does judge us in relation to our response to the word.

The word is proclaimed to us, but it is our responsibility to sanctify ourselves. We know that Satan presently has access to the heavenly places because of the uncleanness in our own houses. We have to know what we are closing the door to in relation to the spirit of the world and how it impacts on our family, because that is allowing Satan into your house, which is into the heavenly places because you are a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem. That is where your house is. Your house belongs to a heavenly city. When Satan is coming into your house, he is getting into the third heaven - the heavenly places.

When that is happening, it will be impacting the fellowship of the body of Christ. Do not think that the sanctification of your house does not have an impact on the fellowship of the body of Christ. If you are not judging yourself rightly in relation to the sanctification of your house, then you will be guilty of not discerning the body because it does have an impact. We need to know what we are shutting the door on, in terms of maintaining our own sanctification.

I will quote another verse here. This is Isaiah 26 verse 1. I am making a simple point with this. I can see what will happen today as I just get to the start of the Lord's prayer. We will look at those elements on another day. Now this is Isaiah 26 verse 1. It says, 'In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah.' Now I think he is talking about the day of the Lord when the Father takes His seat, and His judgements begin to be manifest in the earth. 'In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: "We have a strong city; God will appoint salvation for walls and bulwarks. Open the gates..." ' Let us just the interplay here. As we are learning to shut the door properly in relation to the sanctification of our own house, at the same time, the gates are being flung open for the nations to come into the heavenly Jerusalem. Our sanctification is actually what unlocks evangelism. ' "... Open the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in. You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You." ' Coming down to verse 20. 'Come, my people, enter your chambers.' This is where Jesus is quoting from. That is probably not the right way of saying it. Jesus obviously is the source of the prophetic word which Isaiah is then proclaiming, and Jesus is confirming and proclaiming this during His earthly ministry. This is the one message proclaimed by Isaiah and then by Christ which is saying, 'Come, My people, enter your chambers [go into your inner room], and shut your doors behind you; hide yourself, as

it were, for a little moment, until the indignation is past. [The indignation is talking about God's judgement. Verse 21] For behold, the Lord comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; The earth will also disclose her blood, and will no more cover her slain.'

We are fast approaching the time when the Father takes His seat, and the judgement of God begins to be manifest in the earth. We can see that with the opening of the seals. At the same time, there will be tremendous persecution against the church. Our protection is our obedience and our sanctification. We are maintaining our sanctification through this phase, while at the same time... (this is what I am trying to catch here) ... while at the same time, the gates are flung open for the great multitude to come in. Sanctification and evangelism are not incompatible. In fact, sanctification is what enables evangelism to be effective.

Having established the context for our prayer in the secret place and the need for us to shut the door, Jesus then continued by describing the culture and fellowship of the prayer that we have been called to join as we watch and pray. Let us read this as we finish now. Matthew 6 verse 9: 'In this manner, therefore pray... ', remembering that Jesus is answering the disciples who were asking, 'Lord teach us to pray.' They are observing Christ praying as the Son of God and His relationship with His heavenly Father. They are saying, 'Lord, teach us to pray as a son of God prays by the Spirit.'

Last week, I think Pete said that we may just need to ask (and we do need to ask) the Lord, 'Please teach us to pray.' We are in a season when the Lord is wanting to teach us to pray. There is something new for us here in this season as we are being called to watch and pray with Him. Jesus answers this question, 'In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth

as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.'

Again, this may be a generational thing, but many of us will know that prayer right off by heart. We know that Jesus is not asking us to just recite this because we have already read that He has warned us against vain repetitions. It is helpful to learn this off by heart. I think it is very helpful. It would be good for all the children to know this off by heart. But then recognise that what Jesus is describing is how a son of God prays when they are enabled by the Holy Spirit. Each of these elements of prayer is enabled by the Holy Spirit, beginning with 'our Father'. Abba Father - which you can only cry by the Holy Spirit when you know that God is your Father and you are His son.

Now that is an amazing thing. Each of these statements is quite remarkable when we look at them from the perspective of a son of God praying by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the source and capacity of our prayer. He is the one who initiates and focuses all the dimensions of our prayer as a son of God. We will look forward to looking at this in more detail in the time to come.