

# 24-0121a Transcript

## 24-0121a - James on Prayer, Jim Lokenbauer

**Bible Readers:** Kevin Woosley and Tom Freed

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## James on Prayer

Transcript (0:03 - 34:25)

### Scripture Readings

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Reader: Kevin Woosley

##### Matthew 6:9-13,

(0:03) Good morning. (0:06) Your reading is out of the book of Matthew. (0:09) It is chapter 6, verses 9 through 13. (0:14) 6, 9 through 13.

(0:17) In this manner, therefore, pray. (0:20) Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. (0:23) Your kingdom come, your will be done (0:26) on earth as it is in heaven. (0:28) Give us this day our daily bread (0:30) and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. (0:34) And do not lead us into temptation, (0:36) but deliver us from the evil one. (0:39) For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. (0:43)

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Reader: Tom Freed

##### Ephesians 6:18,

(0:48) Morning. (0:49) I'll be reading Ephesians 6, 18. (0:53) Ephesians 6, 18.

(0:55) Praying at all times in the spirit, (0:57) with all prayer and supplication. (1:00) To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, (1:05) making supplication for all the saints. (1:07)

## Transcript

#### Preacher: Jim Lokenbauer

(1:12) This morning our topic is going to be on prayer. (1:17) If you take a look around in this room, (1:20) there are a lot of people who either themselves (1:24) or have loved ones who have just been taking their lumps (1:28) and some have gone on to their eternal destination.

(1:36) And the Bible gives us so much comfort. (1:43) I mean, God is the God of all comfort, we're told, (1:48) through his word. (1:51) And so when you're hurting, naturally you go to God, (1:54) go to his word, and you go to him in prayer.

(1:59) Kevin this morning brought us the model prayer. (2:04) Jesus' disciples asked him, (2:07) Lord, teach us how to pray. (2:11) And so Jesus gave what we call the Our Father.

(2:17) And it's a beautiful prayer. (2:20) And we can recite it ourselves. (2:26) But God wants genuine prayer from each individual's heart.

(2:35) I'm sure he would appreciate if we were to say the Lord's (2:38) prayer to God. (2:41) I mean, it's a good and effective prayer. (2:44) But I think he'd rather hear from us directly, (2:48) what's on our hearts.

(2:50) You know, Jesus gave them a model to follow. (2:54) And we can spend several lessons just talking about the model (3:00) prayer. (3:02) But my focus this morning is because there's so many people (3:06) hurting in various ways, you know, (3:13) I'm going to go with the kind of prayer that we say to God when (3:19) we're hurting, when our loved ones are suffering.

(3:29) So as you're going through these hard times, (3:36) sometimes when you're in the thick of it, (3:38) it's hard to see the forest through the trees, so to speak. (3:44) It's hard to get the big picture of what's going on. (3:52) And sometimes it's hard to think of anything else other than the (3:59) matter at hand, what you're involved in.

(4:03) That's like trying to get ready for my sermons, (4:07) and I'm sure for Scott with his lessons and sermons. (4:13) It's hard to concentrate when you've got a loved one who's (4:17) suffering. (4:20) Scott can at least take solace in the fact he knows where his (4:27) brother is.

(4:30) And when my sister passed, I'm not quite sure of where her final (4:40) destination may be. (4:42) She claimed to believe, so we'll just trust in the grace of God. (4:51) He is the great judge.

(4:56) But while they were in hospice or while she was in hospice, (5:02) we received several calls saying, this could be the end. (5:08) So you prepare yourself and you go and, you know, (5:11) you say your goodbyes. (5:12) We did that a couple of times with my sister, (5:16) but the last time was the goodbye, (5:18) and you could see upon her expression that she wasn't there.

(5:27) And she was, I don't know what the soul does as they're (5:30) preparing to go on, but you could tell by the look. (5:37) And so, you know, you have all these thoughts running through (5:40) your head as you're trying to prepare a lesson. (5:43) And like I've always said, you get what you pay for.

(5:48) But I hope this will be somewhat helpful to you. (5:52) Now, James, who is the brother of Jesus, (5:56) he wrote an excellent letter to the church, to Christians. (6:01) It's an instructive letter that can help open our eyes and see the (6:06) big picture when we or someone are going through some tough times.

(6:14) And his writing style is very unique and reveals a lot about James. (6:21) His words are very direct and frank, (6:26) and he's a man who does not mince words. (6:30) You know, he lets people have it right between the eyes if they need it.

(6:35) So I'd imagine he was the annoying brother who kept pointing to all the (6:41) other brothers and sisters in Jesus' family. (6:45) So-and-so's doing this, so-and-so's doing that. (6:48) He was probably the little policeman's son that they had.

(6:53) But his words are very useful to us even today. (7:01) James should be a required reading for anyone going through difficult times, (7:06) because he gives the reasons to the Christians who may ask, (7:10) why is this happening to me? (7:13) Or why is this happening to my loved one? (7:17) In James 1, 2 through 4, and jumping down to verse 12, (7:22) I'll string those together. (7:26) Because in the middle of there, he's got a couple of parentheticals.

(7:31) But these are poignant to the point I'm making. (7:37) Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, (7:43) because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. (7:51) Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, (8:01) not lacking anything.

(8:04) Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, (8:07) because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God (8:13) has promised to those who love him. (8:17) When any type of trial, test, trouble, tribulation, or temptation, (8:24) throw in any other T word you can think of, comes our way, (8:29) Jesus tells us to first consider it. (8:35) Consider it pure joy, my brothers.

(8:38) So we have to think about it. (8:41) To consider a matter is to give it careful examination. (8:47) We don't react.

(8:50) We respond to it. (8:53) We exercise our fruit of the spirit called self-control. (8:59) You know, when bad things happen, many times our first reaction is anger.

(9:04) Why? What? (9:09) God doesn't want that. (9:11) As James also tells us in 19 through 26. (9:18) So James wants us to be different from the nonbelievers who react to trouble.

(9:27) We are to respond to trouble. (9:30) We're to respond with the attitude of joy. (9:34) What? (9:36) Consider it pure joy.

(9:43) Even through life, you think of all the things that have happened. (9:51) Did you respond joyously? (9:54) When those trials or temptations happen? (9:59) About when the big semi-truck jumps in the lane in front of you, (10:04) scaring you to death, what's your first reaction? (10:07) It's okay. (10:12) Or are you saying things that you're embarrassed about (10:15) or would be embarrassed about? (10:20) I have to confess, that's where I do most of my sinning.

(10:25) If someone scares me to the point of my life being taken from me on the highway, (10:31) I speak in tongues. (10:34) Not good ones either, to my shame. (10:39) So God will keep testing us where he knows we are weak.

(10:46) Hey, I'm going to give you another chance. (10:48) Have this truck jump in front of you. (10:52) It's okay.

(10:53) I got you covered. (10:54) I'm backing off. (10:57) Yeah.

(11:00) Anyhow, we are to respond with the attitude of joy. (11:03) Even though life may be hard for us for a period of time, (11:07) we should be joyful and happy people. (11:11) And do you know that Paul commanded that? (11:16) Paul commands us to rejoice in the Lord always.

(11:22) And then he repeats it, showing the importance of the apostolic command he gave. (11:29) Rejoice in the Lord always. (11:31) I will say it again.

(11:33) Rejoice. (11:35) That's not a helpful suggestion. (11:38) That's a command.

(11:39) And he was saying that to people who were being persecuted to the point of death. (11:48) Not just a mere traffic mishap that scares you, (11:53) but people who were really facing death and having their faith tested. (12:02) But tests, depending on one's faith, come in big measures or small measures.

(12:09) And God doesn't give us more than we can handle, as he says in the Corinthian letter, thankfully. (12:17) But whatever he gives us, he knows we can handle. (12:21) And so the test is on us to see if we will do it in a way that will either glorify his name (12:30) or make him feel sad that we didn't pass that test.

(12:38) By responding with the proper attitude and looking at a situation from every angle, (12:44) considering it pure joy, (12:49) we may figure out a solution to our problem by thinking carefully about something (12:54) and avoid a lot of heartache if we really consider something. (13:01) If there's no solution or if it's something out of our hands, (13:06) know that at that very moment that it may be God testing you. (13:13) How are you going to respond, son? (13:15) How are you going to respond, daughter? (13:18) So be joyful about it.

(13:20) This is your moment to let your light shine. (13:24) When we let our light shine, God is glorified. (13:28) James gives us the reason God permits us to be tested.

(13:34) And I've given previous lessons that talked about the Greek word for test (13:39) and the Greek word for tempt. (13:43) God tests. Satan tempts.

(13:46) It's the same Greek word, pistos, I believe. (13:52) And you've got to look at the context of how that word is used. (13:58) God is there testing you, hoping you pass the test.

(14:01) Satan is there tempting you, hoping that you disgrace yourself and fail. (14:09) James gives us those reasons. (14:11) And it's to develop us, to mature us, to train us, to rely on God's strength (14:17) and to develop perseverance.

(14:23) Perseverance, besides not only being a word that's hard to say, (14:29) is the result of overcoming adversity. (14:35) We try overcoming our problems. (14:38) We try and sometimes fail.

(14:40) But we keep at it. (14:43) That's what perseverance is. (14:46) We have to keep trying until we have success.

(14:49) And that's the whole point of tests. (14:52) Consider it your joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, (14:57) because God wants to develop perseverance in us. (15:03) And the result of perseverance is the crown of life that we receive (15:08) after we go on from this life.

(15:11) Jeff got a crown of life. (15:15) Praise God. (15:18) Sometimes success is just seeing the problem through to the end, (15:24) even though it might not seem like a win.

(15:28) What's important is that we exercise (15:30) and maintain our Christian morals through whatever that test is (15:35) or even through whatever temptation it may be. (15:43) That's perseverance. (15:46) And it's the keep-on, keep-on attitude that we should have (15:51) whenever we win or lose.

(15:56) We get a lot of failures in our life, (15:59) but hopefully we mature, learn, and grow from those, (16:05) being all the wiser the next time something comes up. (16:09) And doing the same

thing over and over again (16:12) and expecting different results, to me that's stupidity. (16:18) Some people even call that a form of insanity.

(16:23) And it's not perseverance. (16:26) When we persevere, we have learned the lesson. (16:31) We have mastered a problem.

(16:34) We have weathered the storm and come out of it alive spiritually. (16:38) We did not give up. (16:42) Perseverance develops patience in us as well (16:45) and dependence upon God through prayer.

(16:50) We learn that God is in control, (16:52) and at the end of this life we will receive that crown of life, (16:57) eternal life with our Savior. (17:00) That's why we can be joyful even through trials, tests, and temptations. (17:10) It is something that we should look forward to.

(17:13) This life is just a trial or a proving ground to prepare us for heaven. (17:20) Unlike old blue eyes who sings, I did it my way, (17:27) we go to God and do it His way. (17:32) We learn that God is in control.

(17:36) And at times, God's way may seem like the hard way, (17:42) but God has a reason for it, (17:45) and that's to turn us into little Christs. (17:50) That's what Christian means. (17:52) It was meant as a derogatory comment or epithet put upon believers (17:59) that was to mock them.

(18:01) Oh, look at the little Christ. (18:03) But they realized that's the best thing someone can say about me. (18:09) And so they started going around, I'm a Christian.

(18:12) I'm a little Christ. (18:13) And that's what God wants. (18:16) Doesn't He want holy offspring, Peter tells us? (18:20) Yes.

(18:29) So when we're little Christs, we reflect Jesus' image in our life. (18:34) And hasn't Jesus even said that not only He would suffer for all mankind, (18:40) but that His believers would suffer for His namesake? (18:44) Becoming a Christian isn't a cakewalk. (18:47) It isn't a promise that life will suddenly become super easy.

(18:54) We're tested. (18:55) And being on the winning team, God's side, (19:01) Satan then goes from zone defense into full-court thrust, man-on-man. (19:08) He's going to try and take that word that was just planted in your heart away.

(19:14) He's coming at you hard. (19:16) But don't fear Him. (19:21) Resist Him.

(19:24) Jesus showed us how through His temptation in the desert. (19:28) Answer those temptations with Scripture. (19:35) That's where Jesus replied to say man does not live on bread alone, (19:39) but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

(19:46) So to the sick and the suffering, James says your first order of business should be to pray. (19:55) So listen to his words in James 5, 13-16. (20:01) Is any one of you among you suffering misfortune? (20:05) He should pray.

(20:08) Is anyone cheerful? (20:10) He should sing, praise. (20:12) Is anyone sick among you? (20:15) He should summon the elders of the church and they should pray over him, (20:21) anointing him with olive oil in the name of the Lord. (20:26) And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick.

(20:35) And the Lord will raise him up. (20:36) And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. (20:45) Therefore confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, (20:49) so that you may be healed.

(20:52) The effective prayer of a righteous man accomplishes much. (21:00) James recognized the importance of prayer in the believer's life (21:05) and the importance of praying for each other. (21:10) Have we not been faithful to this, to God, by praying for all of our sick? (21:18) Every Sunday we come together, we mention people by name, (21:23) what they're ailing from if we know it, and we pray for them.

(21:31) And we trust in God that he'll do his part. (21:36) And that's to heal them. (21:44) God's people in the Old Testament went through many trials that tested their faith (21:53) and also tested their allegiance to God.

(21:57) In Exodus 20, 20, Moses said to the Israelites, (22:02) do not be afraid, for God has come in order to test you. (22:09) And in order that the fear of him may remain with you, so that you may not sin. (22:21) God knows that man is prone to sin.

(22:25) God loves us and knows that sin can enslave us and be our master. (22:33) And he is a jealous God, he says, (22:37) And once all of our devotion and all of our focus on him, (22:43) not on idols or false gods that we may create in our own lives, (22:50) we're to have no other god except him. (22:54) As Moses said, God will test us to see if we'll be obedient and not sin.

(23:01) Today we may not bow before an actual image of wood or stone or gold or silver, (23:10) but we create idols of other types in our lives that are sinful. (23:16) Paul tells the Christians at Philippi in chapter 3, 18 and 19, (23:22) For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now even tell you with weeping, (23:28) that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, (23:37) whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, (23:45) who set their mind on earthly things. (23:49) And that phrase, Paul says, whose God is their belly, (23:53) he's not talking about gluttonies, although he could be in some instances.

(23:59) Some people make food their God. (24:02) But what he's talking about is our carnal appetites. (24:08) That's what that mode of thinking is in Greek.

(24:14) Our carnal appetites are our belly. (24:20) And people, whatever they desire strongly, that becomes their God with a small g. (24:32) And you're giving that way too much attention, attention that belongs to the true God. (24:40) And God sees that.

He's in us. How can He not see that? (24:45) That's one of the ways He knows all things. He's in everything living, (24:51) including all of us and all of the world who are so sure that He doesn't exist.

(24:58) He's in them too. That's what keeps them alive. (25:02) It's the Spirit that generates this body of flesh to life.

(25:07) It animates us. Therefore it knows the thoughts of man. (25:13) Forgive me, God, for saying it.

You are not neuter gender. (25:19) You are a person. So forgive me for that.

I hate to call God it. (25:31) Anyhow, if we're unrepentant of our idle worship, it can cause us to be eternally lost. (25:42) Sin can so consume us, it literally can deceive us and blind us to the lost spiritual state that we're in.

(25:55) Israel found that out the hard way. (25:57) They rejected all the prophets that God sent them to warn them to repent of being evil, (26:04) to repent of following false gods, idols. (26:11) And their sin got so bad that God permitted the Assyrian king, (26:18) whose name is funny, Tiglath-Kiliezar, just call me Tig, (26:25) to come and utterly take away the ten northern tribes of Israel.

(26:33) And they were gone for good. (26:36) Many of them died. Many of them were assimilated into all kinds of Assyrian territory as slaves.

(26:52) Judah too found itself in the same predicament sometime later. (26:57) In 2 Chronicles 36-16 it says, (27:01) But they mocked the messengers of God and despised His words and scoffed at His prophets (27:09) until Yahweh's wrath arose against His people until there was no remedy. (27:19) There is a point in which a person can get so separated from God, (27:26) so lost, in such a state of apostasy, they can't return.

(27:34) There is no remedy. (27:37) It's like being told, your condition is terminal. (27:42) There's nothing more we can do for you.

(27:45) You're going to die. (27:47) And these people were going to die spiritually because they rejected God's warning. (27:55) By rejecting the prophets, they rejected God.

(28:00) If we reject Christ's teachings in the New Testament, we reject God. (28:11) No remedy. Nothing could fix or heal them.

(28:15) They were in a spiritual hospice waiting to die. (28:19) And so God had to destroy them as a nation in order to get some of them, the remnants, attention. (28:28) Most of them were slaughtered and those who survived were taken into exile to Babylon (28:34) as predicted by God for 70 years.

(28:40) In his first letter to the church, John tells us that there is sin that leads to death (28:47) and that we shouldn't pray about that. (28:50) That's a person who is almost at the point of no remedy. (29:03) And I believe that.

(29:04) I believe that a person who is unrepentant of the sin in their life, (29:10) that if it's become their idol, there's a rubber stamp. (29:17) Stamped upon you, no remedy. (29:20) That's scary.

(29:23) God is the God of all mercy and grace and forgiveness. (29:27) And to receive a no remedy from the great physician? (29:33) I tried everything to heal you. (29:38) I'm sorry, there's no remedy.

(29:43) John concluded his first letter to the church and he chose the phrase, (29:50) little children, keep yourselves from idols. (29:55) Of all the things John could have written for his parting words to the church, (30:03) he chose keep yourselves from idols. (30:06) Is it important? (30:09) Oh, yeah.

(30:10) We think today because we don't have some statue we bow before. (30:16) Oh, that's an idol. (30:18) I'm cool.

(30:19) Now, what do you put absolute attention to? (30:27) What is it that controls you? (30:36) Are you addicted to looking at the horoscope? (30:39) Oh, I just got to look and see what it says. (30:47) Sin comes in so many ways. (30:48) We make idols out of so many different things.

(30:53) We have to keep ourselves from idols. (30:58) So there's some prayers that won't fix that. (31:04) Consider this.

(31:04) We know the essence of Yahweh's name. (31:08) He's the God who was and is and is to come. (31:14) Yahweh has always been.

(31:16) Since he is eternal and time has no influence on him whatsoever, (31:22) that makes him the same as he was and is and is to come. (31:29) He does not change. (31:32) Point being, what he felt about something during the time of the prophets (31:37) thousands of years ago, he still feels today.

(31:42) He doesn't change. (31:44) What was simple back then is still simple today. (31:47) What was pleasing to him long ago is still pleasing to him today.

(31:53) So if Yahweh is jealous for Judah and Israel and did not like them chasing (31:59) after false gods, putting something before him and making him sort of an afterthought (32:07) or worshiping something other than him, (32:11) what do you think Jesus feels about his bride? (32:19) Do you think he might be jealous for his bride, us, the church? (32:25) If we flirt with an idol that we've created in our lives (32:31) and if we go off chasing after anything and put more value on that thing or that thought, (32:40) more than we value the Lord, don't you think he'd be displeased with us? (32:47) Prayer can't help that if you're in a sinful state of no remedy. (32:55) And I believe with all my heart that time of Christ's return could be soon, anytime. (33:05) But whether he returns tonight or a couple hundred years from now, long after we're gone, (33:12) shouldn't we always be in a state of readiness like the ten wise virgins have in their lamps with extra oil? (33:24) Be ready.

(33:26) Jesus said, be ready. No one knows the hour in which he'll return. (33:36) And as Tom read for us, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

(33:47) If you see someone drifting away, grab them. (33:52) If you see someone drifting away, pray for them. (33:57) And this is the start of a new year, so let's be wise.

Let's be ready. (34:03) Let's pray for each other. (34:05) And if you need the prayers from the saints for any matter, for strength, (34:12) or if you've sinned and blown it and you feel overwhelmed, we'll pray for you.

(34:18) God will forgive you and give you strength. (34:21) Now is the time, so please come forward. (34:24) This is the invitation.