

The LPG

Deliver Us Out Of

February 21, 2021

Good Morning big family! If you're visiting, welcome home. I'm pastor Bruce; and on behalf of all the good friends you haven't yet met, I want to welcome you to where we're all learning together how to allow our Dad to deliver us out of the evil we get ourselves into.

So ... **any sin currently sweeping you off your feet?**



Our omni-faceted Father has designed many parallels to help us grasp His intrinsic qualities.

And so, with the aid of the **LPG**, we can begin each day **adoring our Dad** with an informal, relational greeting; and immediately balancing *that* by **revering our Creator** with worship and devotion; followed by **hallowing our Almighty God** by discussing our obedience and trust; and then **kneeling to our King** (by planning *our* advancing of *His* kingdom); and **yielding to our Lord** (by requesting *His* will in *our* decisions); and **requesting dough from our Bread of Life**; and then exposing our sin and **confessing our mess to our Judge** so He can wipe *our* slate clean, as we turn to **overcoming evil like our Mentor** by forgiving *our* offenders; and then **prepping to follow our Shepherd** and flee the avoidable, and resist the unavoidable, temptations "du jour".



But what about the sin we're caught up in and struggling against? This calls for the last request and the most encouraging, reassuring, and hopeful lines in the LPG: **a built-in cry for help for when we're in the deep end, going under and gasping for air.** Jesus says: you're gonna *need* that.

Lead us NOT INTO temptation, but DELIVER us FROM the evil. – Matthew 6:13 NKJ

Some translations say "from the evil one," others just, "the evil". We've been using "the evil one". But the original (as seen in Young's literal translation) is simply "deliver us from the evil", which is more encompassing. So let's re-learn it *that* way. Either way, **it's a cry for our Life Savior** whenever, wherever, and however we're caught up in the current of the current evils around us.



You see, sin is very much like wading into the flooded gentle shallows of a muddy raging river. **It's very easy to grossly underestimate the dangerous current;** as well as the current dangers of drop-offs lurking under the murky surface, patiently waiting to swallow you up and sweep you away. Whether it's something offensive that riles you, or alluring that wiles you, or seductive that beguiles you, the call of temptation is simply: **"Wade on in!"** And so we stick in our toe, oh so ignorant of the undertow. And that's when Dad calls out, **"Come away before you're swept away."**



Because once we take the plunge, and we're in over our head, we can no longer be led "not into", but need to be delivered "out of". Now the word "deliver" here means to "draw" or "pull" to one's self; which is precisely how our Life Savior delivers us. He comes after us to draw us to himself to bring us back to solid ground.



No matter how often we fall, or how far we're carried away, He's watching for the moment we **recognize** the wrongdoing we're doing; and sincerely **regret** it (without self-loathing, please), and **return** to our Dad to **reestablish** our relationship and **receive** a life-ring of grace.

Even when our condition is chiefly, or entirely, caused by another, our cry for deliverance is *not* a passive prayer. Paul writes:

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. – Romans 12:21 NIV

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. – Romans 12:17 NIV

Whatever form "the evil" might take, if I allow someone else's *sin* to dictate or determine *my* response, and I wade on in to answer evil with evil – whatever "the evil" may be – I'm not being *delivered*, I'm being overcome. **I'm trading my Life Savior for an anchor**. So don't allow someone else's sin to sink in. Hold fast! Trust. Release the anchor and let Dad deliver.

[The Lord says] Because he holds fast to Me in love, [see *our* part in the process: "**Hold fast**" "**in love**" and don't let go. That's it. Do *that* and He says] I *will* deliver him; I will protect him, *because* he knows *My* name. When he calls to Me, I *will* answer him; I will be *with* him in trouble; I will *rescue* him *and* honor him. – Psalm 91:14-15 ESV



So, deliver me from pride and fear and help me apologize to that big jerk I told off at work. *He* should apologize to *me*! But, *he's* not the one praying to be delivered; he's just floatin' along! Think it's downright dumb to trade a Life Savior for an anchor? Well then you should definitely ...

Lay aside *every* weight, and *sin* which clings so closely ... – Hebrews 12:1 RSV

Let us cling to *Him* and *never* stop trusting Him. – Hebrews 4:14 NLT

Cling to Him, for *He* is your life – Deuteronomy 30:20 NKJ

Cling *tightly* to your faith in *Christ*, and *always* keep your conscience clear. For some people have deliberately violated *their* consciences; as a result, *their* faith has been shipwrecked. – 1 Timothy 1:19 NLT

I will set *nothing* wicked before my eyes ... it *shall* not cling to me. A perverse *heart* shall *depart* from me; – Psalm 101:2-4 NKJ

Therefore, get rid of *all* moral filth and *the evil* that is so prevalent and humbly accept *the Word* planted *in* you, which can *save* you. – James 1:21 NIV

Our cry for help involves our #1 evil one, which we saw a couple weeks ago: our own heart.



God cannot be tempted by *evil*, nor does He tempt anyone; but *each* person is tempted when they are dragged away by [the undertow of] their own *evil desire* and enticed. Then, after [our own evil] desire has conceived, it [i.e. our own evil desire] gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. Don't be deceived, – James 1:13-16 NIV

Deliver me from being isolated, enticed, and open to the evil of my own deceptive heart. Don't be deceived, me and evil left alone in a room are gonna make a sin-baby! Because:

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? [Here's a hint] I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, – Jeremiah 17:9-10 NKJ

[So] Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight. – Isaiah 5:20-21 NIV

And you know that's *us*, right? They don't know they do that. But, whenever we justify even the slightest sin or deviation from pure and perfect truth and love, we *do* that. That's what we do. So how do you hope to be delivered from the evil that comes from within? **Stop feeding the enemy.** Repay no one evil for evil. Overpower evil with the good God puts in your heart.

When wisdom enters your heart, and knowledge is pleasant to your soul, discretion will preserve you; [that's our built-in life preserver] understanding will keep you, to deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things, from those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness; who rejoice in doing evil, and delight in the perversity of the wicked; – Proverbs 2:10-14 NKJ

Being delivered from the evil around us so often entails being delivered from the evil within us. Because So much of "the evil" that surrounds us personally and individually has so much to do with how we're reacting or responding to "the evil" around us trying to drag us away.



And the lack of God *around* us is often determined by the lack of God *within* us – especially if we're the only believer involved – because **we're the ones tasked with applying and facilitating God's love, light, and truth**, as His apprentice ambassadors, to any, every, and all circumstances and situations in which we currently find ourselves flooded.

If our heart is not focused on bringing God's love, light, and truth into a situation, there can be no deliverance from the evil in it; because, by definition, **evil is the absence of God's love, light, and truth** – and evil can only really be destroyed by the presence of God's love, light, and truth. Otherwise it's like trying to avoid darkness while refusing to turn on the lights; or trying to be delivered without holding fast in love to our One and only eternal hope and Savior.

We can take incredible comfort in the sheer volume of David's Psalms dedicated to crying out in the midst of *his* enemies, for *forgiveness*, and for the light of truth to deliver him from drowning.

Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to my neck. I sink in deep mire ... I have come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. ... Those who hate me ... would destroy me ... O God, You *know* my foolishness; and my *sins* are not hidden from You. ... *Deliver* me out of the mire, and let me not sink; let me be *delivered* from those who hate me, *and* out of the deep waters. ... Draw near to my soul, and redeem it; – Psalm 69:1-18 NKJ

Lead me in Your *truth* and *teach* me, for You are the God of my salvation; ... Look on my affliction and my pain, and forgive all *my* sins. Consider my *enemies*, for they are *many*; and they hate me with cruel hatred. Keep *my* soul, and *deliver* me; let me not be *ashamed*, for I put *my* trust in You. – Psalm 25:4-20 NKJ

In *You*, O Lord, I put my *trust*; let me never be *ashamed*; *deliver* me in *Your* righteousness. ... *Lead* me and *guide* me. *Pull* me out of the net ... For You *have* considered my trouble; ... My strength fails because of *my* iniquity, – Psalm 31:1-10 NKJ

Oh, *deliver* me from the deceitful and unjust man! ... Oh, send out Your *light* and Your *truth*! Let them *lead* me; ... Why are you cast down, O my *soul*? And *why* are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; – Psalm 43:1-5 NKJ



This final appeal in the LPG, this cry for help to be saved from the sin that is currently sweeping us away, isn't supposed to be solely directed to our Life Savior. Some sin is so overpowering that we can only make it back to the safety of the shore with the help of a buoy or a girly that our Big Daddy has placed around us in order to help save us.



Therefore confess your sins to each other *and pray for each other* [Did you wonder why we say, “deliver us from the evil”?] so that you may be healed. – James 5:16 NIV



If there *is* a sin that's currently carrying you downstream, have you shared it with a godly friend who'll understand *and* can offer help? You *need* that. *And* you need to *be that* to someone *else*. Life's goal isn't to just *not* do *bad* things. That's shallow. “How was your life?” “Well, I didn't wade *too* deep into *too* many *bad* things.”

Life's goal is to grow into a God-glorifying life guard! Fishers of man don't use hooks or nets, they deliver those soul survivors by the power of our Life Savior. So when we pray “deliver us from the evil” we're asking Jesus to pull us close, hold us tight, re-ashore us, and resuscitate with His life. Not only to rescue but *redeem*. To teach us from it. **To deepen our devotion, appreciation, and conviction** that He alone deserves my love and trust and obedience. And once safely back to shore, to use it to help us serve, save, and re-ashore others.

And so we **PRAY**, “deliver us from the evil,” and then we **PAUSE** to consider, as Paul puts it:

The evil I will *not* do, *that* I practice. ... *evil* is present with *me*, the one who *wills* to do *good*. ... Who will *deliver me* from this body of death? [Here's a hint:] I thank God— through Jesus Christ our Lord! – Romans 7:18-25 NKJ



And then **PERSONALIZE** this built-in cry for help for whatever muddy sin is flooding in, whether we're wading, drifting, or drowning – as well as praying for the saving of those we're assisting. **Sometimes we just need to throw 'em a line** – like that one we just read from Paul.

And since we avoid feeling ashamed, try to separate (what I call) good guilt (feeling bad about what I've done) from sinful shame (feeling bad about who I am). "I feel bad because I called that guy at work a you-know-what." Good guilt. "I'm worthless as a witness." Sinful shame.

FYI: **the worse your witness the more powerful your potential impact** when you finally allow Dad to deliver you to do the right thing! But don't use that as an excuse to put it off! Anchors away! Make it right. Make amends. Make Dad proud. Own up to *your* part however minor; be the bigger sinner! The *better* sinner? You know what I mean.

Praying this won't always make the bad go away – what with a fallen world and free will – but it gets the ball rolling as Dad is now allowed to get to work, beginning in our heart. Because, He's far more concerned with what's happening *in* us than what's happening *to* us. That's why we have to hold fast in love, and trust that He's there and He cares, despite any current conditions.

You see, sin is what I do when my heart isn't satisfied with God. And in this respect, **sin is diagnostic**. It might be an expression of loneliness or emptiness or helplessness or powerlessness, etcetera-essness. But whatever-essness it is, **sin itself is a cry for help**.

Which means whatever desire we're trying to fulfill *outside* His will, we need to release and replace with a superior, healthier, and all-around better-ier design that's *inside* His will.

And He'll grant us wisdom to discern the good from "the evil".

And He'll lead us back to the shore of love, light, and truth.

Resist the devil and he'll flee.

Submit to God and He'll deliver.

Now let's memorize together what we'll personalize alone.

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 lead us not into temptation,¹ but deliver us from the evil.² For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. – Matthew 6:9-13 NKJ

¹ This line is from the KJV rather than the NKJ which reads: "Do not lead us into temptation"

² This line is from the YLT rather than the NKJ which reads: "Deliver us from the evil one"