

“COURAGEOUS FAITH: PRAYING THE LORD’S PRAYER”
“Deliver us from Evil”

We have just two more weeks in our sermon series “*Courageous Faith: Praying the Lord’s Prayer.*” The prayer that Jesus taught is one of the ways we grow as disciples, leaning into God’s grace and trusting God’s love for us. Last week we looked at the phrase “*lead us not into temptation*” This phrase, has us asking how we can be aware and discerning of the temptations around us. This week we finish that phrase with “*and deliver us from evil.*” Somehow temptation and evil go hand in hand. So we ask not to be tempted and to be taken out of the presence of evil. Our scriptures look at both how we have the presence of God to help us resist the power of evil and how we sometimes need to be reminded that we do evil in the midst of our judging of one another. The General Conference of the United Methodist is in session. Please pray for the delegates and our church and as they work through the issues of what The Way Forward looks like for our denomination. ---Pastor Cindy

Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon: **“Deliver us from Evil”**

All Holy Being, whom we call by many different names, blessed are you. Blessed are we in you. May we create with you a realm of mercy, peace and justice. May love be done in the here and now as it is in the infinite. May we share life in bread and hope. For our failure to love, we need forgiveness. May we find the paths of reconciliation. In the midst of evil’s every incarnation, from the powers that possess our spirits and our structures, may we find liberation. In the power that is love, we seek to live and move and have our beings. May it be so, now and forever. (Nancy L Steeves StSC.N-TP)

Study Guide

Monday, February 25, 2019 1 Peter 3: 8-9

First Peter as a letter is not written to an individual or a particular church, but to several churches and was meant to be passed from church to church. It is a later epistle which we know because of the “household codes” which are specific about behaviors between husband and wives and slaves. The point of this letter is about how Christians behave in the world and how they respond to evil in the world. The author is very intentional about describing what Christian behavior looks like. *“Don’t pay back evil for evil or insult for insult. Instead give a blessing in return.”* Those are profound words and challenging words. We ask to be delivered from evil, but this author shows how we confront evil, but not giving in. Christians are called to be of one mind, compassionate and caring of fellow believers. As the United Methodist Church wrestles with being of one mind, pray for the delegates at General conference. Pray that they might be *“modest in their own opinion”* and give blessings to one another even as they struggle to be part of a way forward.

Tuesday, February 26, 2019 1 Peter 3: 10-12

These verses come straight from the Psalms. Psalm 34: 12-16 is paraphrased here matching the psalmist words to the previous verses. This is called “proof texting” but the reason was to base what was being written in scripture that was known. Remember that there was no Bible as we know it, there was the Old Testament, these letters were being used to anchor followers of Jesus to the faith. We still anchor ourselves in the Old Testament or Hebrew scriptures. Christians are called to offer blessings, the psalmist reminds us to not speak evil if we want to love life and live well all our days. *Today as the General Conference comes to a close, pray that our delegates give blessings and not speak evil and do good. Pray for them as we live into the way forward they have legislated for us.*

Wednesday, February 27, 2019 1 Peter 3: 13-17

Basically the author says don’t be upset by those who would question your faith or treat you badly for it. Be ready to defend your life of blessing, your life of faith. Often we call that witness. When we pray, we are also challenged to be part of standing up against evil whether by our blessing or by our witness to who God is in Jesus Christ. God gives us strength and comfort and what we need to not just be delivered from evil but stand up as partners with Jesus against the evil in our world. *Today, pray the Lord’s Prayer, the one in this study guide or one you are most comfortable with. Ask God to guide and direct you during your day.*

Thursday, February 28, 2019 Luke 6: 39-42

We have been in and out of this chapter of Luke during this sermon series. It is part of Jesus’ well known sermon (on the mount in the Matthew and on the plain here in Luke.) This riddle and these verses come right after Jesus challenges his followers to not judge, to forgive and to give. When focusing on the phrase *“deliver us from evil”*, perhaps Jesus is helping us look beyond our judgment of others. In these teachings, Jesus points out that when we spend so much time focusing on the faults, failings and sins of others, we miss the faults, failings and sins in our own lives. Evil is all around us and we can’t get past our own sin if we don’t pay attention to evil in our own hearts and spirits. We need to be delivered from our own evil and our own temptations to judge others. *How will you allow God to deliver you from evil today? In what ways will you be able to live instead in the way that the author of 1 Peter described?*

Friday, March 1, 2019 Luke 6: 43-45, 1 Peter 3: 8-9

Here Jesus nails it: our lives are a reflection of what is happening in our own lives and hearts and spirits. People don’t bring good things out of evil hearts. Bad trees don’t produce good fruit. In 1 Peter, the author writes to be modest, and to not think too highly of one’s self and one’s opinion, but instead bless people. Don’t repay evil for evil. Out of the heart of Christ believers are able to offer good and blessings. Delivers us from evil, take the log out of our eyes and then allow the good fruit to be seen and known. That fruit comes from our relationship with Christ. *How do you allow Jesus to cleanse your heart, your mind and your spirit so that you are delivered from evil? Today, pray the Lord’s Prayer, pray it deeply and with faith that you will be delivered and you will be a blessing to others.*