

Pastor Britt's Opening Prayer:

Lord, we are in need of You today. We're in need of Your presence; more of it in our lives, more of Your presence in our community. We're in need of more of Your power; more of Your miracle-working, life-saving power in our lives and in our community. We confess today that we are in need of being obedient to You. To be in a place, Lord, where you can use us for such a time as this, when there is so much going on that would baffle the mind and break the heart. Lord, we need You. We need You to guide and direct us and we need You to manifest the victory that You won on Calvary. We are asking that You, through our lives, would bring the power of the cross unto this coastline; that the battle of the will that You won in Gethsemane would be manifested in our lives. That when the flesh is weak, we would walk according to the Spirit. That when the body is weary, we would look to Your strength and Your comfort. So speak to us today and begin a good work in us. Thank You that You'll be faithful to complete the work that You've begun. We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.

We are starting our message in **Genesis 3** where we read of the fall of man.

- God had created man and placed him in the Garden to have an intimate relationship with Him.
 - Adam had *walked* in the cool of the day with the Lord.
 - God told man that sin would bring consequences.
 - Sin ushered death into the world.
 - The Deceiver, Satan, the Father of Lies was also in the Garden.
 - God also pronounced consequences or judgments upon the Tempter, the evil one Satan, for his role in the fall of man.
 - **Genesis 3:15** God says, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman . . ."
 - God is referring to the devil and the offspring of Eve, which is mankind.
- . . . and between your seed and her seed;
- Her seed refers to the promise of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.
- . . . he will crush your head, and you will bruise him on the heel."
- Jesus will crush Satan
 - This is the first prophecy of Jesus Christ.
 - Jesus will have victory over the enemy.
 - The enemy will bruise the heel of Messiah through his evil work in the world.
 - But, Jesus would one day crush the head of Satan.

**In the Garden of Eden, God made a declaration of war against Satan.
In the Garden of Gethsemane, God won the victorious battle.**

Mark 14:32-42

³² They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." ³³ He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. ³⁴ "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch." ³⁵ Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if it were possible the hour might pass from him. ³⁶ "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for You. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what You will." ³⁷ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Simon," he said to Peter, "Are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour?" ³⁸ Keep watching and praying so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." ³⁹ Once more he went away and prayed the same words. ⁴⁰ When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to answer him. ⁴¹ Returning the third time, he said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Arise! Let us be going! Here comes my betrayer!"

- Along with the betrayal of Jesus Christ, the battle for lives of men and women was decided upon in the Garden of Gethsemane.
 - It is called the Battle of the Wills.
 - Jesus was wrestling and struggling with the reality of the cross. He came to the place where He would yield His will to that of the Father's, where He would submit Himself to be the sacrifice for mankind. From this point, He would willingly go to the cross.
 - This is where defeat was declared upon the enemy.
 - Earlier in the wilderness, the enemy had tempted Jesus and His ministry. Now, Satan tempted Jesus to once again skip the cross.
 - This is where the head of the enemy is crushed and the victory of Jesus Christ is won.

The Lord said that the Messiah would crush the head of the evil one.

- Crushing of many sorts took place in Gethsemane
 - Gethsemane means "oil press."
 - The Garden of Gethsemane is filled with olive trees.

- Olives were placed on a large stone upon which another large stone was placed which **crushed** the olives and **extracted** the oil from them.
- Olive oil was very precious and valuable to the people of the Middle East.
- The Garden is the place of crushing.
 - The enemy was crushed here when Jesus Christ yielded Himself and said to the Father, “Not My will be done, but Your will be done. If there’s any way to skip the cross, Father let’s do it. But to save humanity, Your will be done.”
 - In that moment, the will of Jesus, in His humanity, was crushed, as He submitted Himself to God.
 - Jesus would go the cross, where He would be crushed to accomplish the redemption of man. The cross is an olive press.
 - **Isaiah 53:10** (about Jesus), “But the Lord was pleased to **crush** Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render Himself as a guilt offering...”
 - In a matter of a few hours, Jesus would be crushed, beaten, bruised, mocked, spit upon, and broken, on His way to the cross and upon it.

**As an olive is crushed under the weight of a stone,
Jesus would be crushed under the weight of our sin.**

- It pleased the Lord to crush Jesus, if He would offer Himself for the sins of the world.
- In His humanity, Jesus knew of the physical crushing that would come His way. But Jesus did not fear the **physical aspect** of the cross.
- Jesus’ soul was distressed to the point of death by the **spiritual reality** of the cross.
 - Upon the cross, God placed all the burden of humanity’s sin upon Jesus.
 - **2 Corinthians 5:21** “He made Him who knew no sin to become sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

**On the cross, Jesus did not become a sinner.
Jesus became sin.**

- When you come to God and declare yourself a sinner, you are saying that you understand that Jesus died on the cross for your sin. When you ask God to forgive you and save you, at that moment, God declares you righteous.
 - No longer guilty but perfect in the eyes of God.
 - God only sees you through the lens of His Son, who lived a perfect life because we couldn’t.
- On the cross, God treated Jesus as if He had lived my imperfect life,
so that I could be treated as if I had lived His Son’s perfect life.**
- The wrath of and separation from God brought about Jesus’ distress and spiritual battle.

NOTE: The last thing that Satan wants to see is your forgiveness! There was a battle in the garden because Satan wants you guilty, burdened, condemned, dirty, ashamed and full of blame and God wants to remove all of that from you!

Satan wanted mankind to be condemned.

Jesus wanted mankind to be redeemed.

Jesus won the victory!

- In the realization of what it would mean to “bear the sins of the world”, Jesus understood that there would come a break in communication with the Father.
 - Jesus was **always** in perfect communion with the Father. “I say only what the Father tells me to say. I do only what I see the Father doing.”
 - Before the cross, in **Mark 14:36**, Jesus would cry, “Abba, Father.”
 - No Jew had ever called the God of the Bible, “Abba, Father.” It is the equivalent of saying, “Daddy, Papa.” They were too reverent for that.
 - On the cross, when the sins of the world were placed upon Him, Jesus went from addressing God the Father as “Daddy!” to “Eloi, My God”.
 - **Mark 15:34** “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?”—Which means, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”
- The prospect of being separated from the Father was very terrifying for Jesus.
 - **Mark 14:35** He began to pray that **if it were possible**, the hour might pass from Him.
 - The “hour” - when He would suffer upon the cross the spiritual weight of sin being placed upon Him.
 - **Mark 14:36** “Abba, Father. All things are possible for You. Remove this cup from me.”

- Jesus is praying that if there is any other way to save, forgive and bring to heaven “Britt,” “Tom,” “Sue”, you, and me, then let it be done.
- The reality of bearing **the sins of the world** is way too much for us to comprehend.
 - In the garden, Jesus experienced a physical condition called *Hematidrosis*.
 - Stress so severe that blood seeps out of your pores.
- Jesus prayed 3 times to the Father for another way. But, His final prayer of surrender, submission, and resolve was, “ Father, You know best. Your will be done.”

NOTE: There are two things we must know in light of what Jesus prayed and struggled with in the Garden of Gethsemane:

1. Sin carries an indescribable weight.

- a. Sin is very destructive in its nature and so very horrible.
 - i. This is why Jesus was in such agony in the garden. This is why He experienced the Hematidrosis, the weight and the battle.
- b. We cannot begin to understand the weightiness of sin. We play games with sin. We think it's not such a big deal. We think that God will turn a blind eye from it. “Everybody does it.” We make too light of it. God sees sin very differently.

Until we see Him face to face, we will never understand the way God sees sin.

In the eyes of God, sin is so severe that He gave His only begotten Son to die for our sin.

- c. We need to take God's word that sin is horrible. However, everyone thinks they can beat the odds.

God hates sin because sin kills and destroys people.

There is weightiness to it.

Pray for this understanding.

2. The cross was absolutely necessary. It is the only way to salvation!

- a. Jesus Christ died upon the cross for our sin to assure our forgiveness.
 - i. The only way to have the sin problem removed and to enter into eternal life is by coming to Him and saying, “Jesus, I understand that You died for me. Please forgive me.”
 - ii. If another way does exist, then God is sick, twisted, perverse, and evil.

1) His Son, Jesus, prayed three times, “If there is any other way for these to be saved, Father let's do that!” God said, “No.”

The cross is the only way to be saved!

NOTE: Christian, you must aggressively defend the uniqueness of the cross of Jesus Christ. You must aggressively defend the gospel. You must preach the gospel. The name of Jesus is the only way by which men and women may be saved.

The Battle of the Will

Mark 14:36 “...nevertheless let not my will be done, but your will.”

- The temptation in the garden was to **SKIP THE CROSS!**
 - Jesus was victorious over that temptation on that day.
- The temptation in the wilderness had also been about skipping the cross.
 - Satan offered Jesus all the things of the world and Jesus did not dispute the fact that he could.
 - Satan is the god of the world.
 - Man has submitted himself and the world to Satan.
 - Satan offered everything to Jesus if He'd only skip the cross.
 - Jesus replied, “It is written: you shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.”
 - Jesus was victorious over that temptation on that day, too.
- As He prayed in the Garden, Jesus fell to His knees and then to His face from the weight of the moment. It was so tremendous that three times He asked the Father if there was any other way.
- The moment that Jesus Christ yielded His power to the Father, He won the Battle of the Wills in the garden - - - victory for you and me.
 - Because Jesus had victory in the wilderness and victory in the garden, we can live victorious lives.
 - **Romans 6** “Sin no longer has power over us. We are to reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God. We should no longer present our members as members of unrighteousness, but present ourselves to God as instruments for righteousness.”

When your own Garden of Gethsemane comes, follow the example of Jesus:

Yield to the will of God.

- At the time, it may seem as though there could have been a better way or even a different way. Nevertheless, Jesus yielded to God's way.
 - This is what it takes to have the victory in the Garden of Decision.

- Satan will use and do everything he can to confuse you and confound you, to bring you to the point of despair.
 - The way out of this is not so easy: You must **willingly** submit to the Father and to His Word!
 - This is the way of the cross. Jesus said, "If anyone wants to come to Me, he must pick up his cross daily and deny himself."
 - God's Word is Truth. He is always right.
 - We often think we're right, but it's not true. If you are in contradiction to the Word of God, **you** are wrong!
 - The Battle of the Wills will be won with the Word of God. Ultimately, the battle belongs to the Lord!
 - The Battle has been won in the garden and on the cross.
 - The moment the children of Israel were released from Egypt and began to walk with the Lord again, Pharaoh changed his mind. The moment they began to walk in freedom, Pharaoh pursued with all his army.

**If you live in defeat, the enemy will not worry about you.
You're neither a threat to him nor an asset to the kingdom of God.**

**If you walk in victory and freedom from shame and guilt,
Expect all the forces of hell to come against you.**

While Satan wants you in bondage, Jesus delivered you from it.

- Colossians 1:13 "For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves."
 - When someone is saved (born-again), he or she is transferred from the domain of darkness to the kingdom of light.
- When Pharaoh pursued Israel, they found themselves up against the Red Sea with no place to go. In **Exodus 14:13** "Moses answered the people, 'Do not be afraid. Stand by and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. The Egyptians whom you have seen today you will never see again forever.' "
- Stand by and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today. The Lord will fight for you, while you keep silent.
 - In the Garden, the Lord Jesus Christ was fighting on our behalf.
- **2 Chronicles 20:17** "You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you."
 - King Jehoshaphat and his people did not have to go against the enemy to fight the battle. The Lord fought in their place and won the victory.
 - The people were instructed to show up, not to do battle, just sing praises to the Lord. The enemy turned against themselves and killed each other until none was left alive.

**Stand firm. Remain steady.
The battle belongs to the Lord. The victory is yours.**

- **James 4:7** "Resist the devil and he will flee from you."
- **1 Samuel 17:47** David said to Goliath the Philistine, "All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give all of you into our hands."

NOTE: even though the battle is won, we will experience its effects.

Two Postures are Necessary for the Battle of the Wills

1. Wait

Mark 14 ³² They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray."

- Jesus lets them know that there's going to be a battle that night. But, they can sit it out, while Jesus goes out and fights the battle (prays).
 - Something like what you would tell a child in a dangerous situation, "Sit here and do not move, while I"
 - Like a child you are tempted to run, look, and get into trouble.
 - This the same way we respond when the Lord tells us to sit still and wait on the Lord.
 - By nature as Americans, we're into instant gratification. We can't wait. It's too much work. Very difficult for us.

NOTE: Work is being accomplished as we wait on the Lord. God is working on our behalf.

- When the disciples were in the boat and their lives were threatened, Jesus was on the mountaintop praying!
 - **Hebrews 8:34** "Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us."
- When the Lord tells us to wait, He is working in the circumstances. He is working in your heart. And, He wants to work through you.
 - A crushing may have to take place so that the precious oil may pour forth from your life.
 - We may have to be broken.
 - Sometimes it's the actual waiting process that breaks us.
 - The weight of waiting brings a crushing as of an olive. Then, that precious, useful and valuable oil comes forth from our lives.
- When David the Psalmist was again in danger, in the midst of his circumstance he wrote, **Ps. 27:11-12** "Teach me Thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a level path, because of my foes. Do not deliver me over to the desire of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and such as breathe out violence."
 - This is a perfect picture of Satan. Jesus taught us to pray, "But deliver us from **evil**."
 - The enemy is the Father of Lies. He has been so, since the beginning.
 - **John 10:10** Jesus said, "The enemy comes to kill, steal and destroy."
- **Ps. 27:13-14** "I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the Lord."
 - David says he would have freaked out, been at his wit's end, and panicked, unless he had believed and had had faith that the Lord would bring good out of his circumstances. He didn't understand how the Lord would defeat his enemies or take care of his situation; he just had faith in God.
 - Because David believed in the Lord, he was **able** to wait.

God is faithful. Wait on the Lord.

Is. 40:28-31 "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might He increases power. Though youths grow weary and tired, and vigorous young men stumble badly, Yet those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary."

- God's promise is that if He tells you to wait, He is working to bring you fresh power and renewed strength

**Victory will be manifested in your life,
if you would just stay in the place of obedience.**

2. Pray

Mark 14 ³³ He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. ³⁴ "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch."

- Jesus took the disciples a little further into the battleground. Then, He tells them to remain where they are and watch.
 - **Mark 14:37-38** explains what Jesus meant when He told them to "watch". ³⁷ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Simon," he said to Peter, "Are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? ³⁸ Keep watching and praying so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."
 - When the battle was raging, Peter, James and John had been called to pray. They had been called to go a little deeper into the battlefield, a little further into its midst. They were nearer to the battle than the others were and Jesus had commanded *them* to pray.
 - The spirit is the spiritual man, the born-again man or woman within you, who will want to do what is right and who desires to please God.
 - The flesh represents the sinful nature within you. It will always want to please itself, whether or not it is the right thing to do. It is weak when it concerns the things of God.

**In the midst of the battle between the spirit and the flesh,
God calls you to watch and to engage in prayer.**

- **2 Corinthians 10** ⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they are divinely powerful for tearing down strongholds.
 - Tear down every speculation that would exalt itself against the knowledge of God.

Prayer is a divinely powerful weapon!

Every false idea or ideology that would exalt itself against the truth of God can be torn down through prayer.

- We have a weapon given to us, which is divinely powerful. It can destroy every idea that Satan can raise up in our hearts and minds against the true knowledge of God, who made us, loves us, and wants to save us.
 - **That weapon is prayer.**

NOTE: There is a battle raging in our community. Satan wants to rip people off. Jesus Christ wants to give people life. Although the battle belongs to the Lord, we have been invited to engage and participate in it. With regards to our community and our desire to see the youth saved, “we have not, because we ask not!” (James 4:2) The Lord beckons us into the battle, into the Garden of Gethsemane. He is asking us to PRAY!

**God has stationed us in this community.
There is a command upon us to pray!**

- Peter refused to engage. Three times the Lord commanded him to pray. Three times Peter denied the Lord Jesus Christ.

**The Lord is calling!
Hear the battle call for us to watch and pray for the youth of our community!
To dismiss the calling would be as disastrous for us as it was for Peter!**

- The biggest hindrance to the victory at the Garden of Gethsemane, which is being manifested in our midst, is spiritual laziness.
 - **Proverbs 6:6-11** “Go to the ant, O sluggard, observe her ways and be wise, Which having no chief, officer, or ruler, prepares her food in the summer, and gathers her provision in the harvest. How long will you lie down, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? ‘A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest’ – And your poverty will come in like a vagabond, and your need like an armed man.”
 - This passage is very humbling. The Lord is saying to us, “You need to learn something. Go watch an ant!”
 - **Proverbs 24:30-34** “I passed by the field of the sluggard, and by the vineyard of the man lacking sense; And behold, it was completely overgrown with thistles. Its surface was covered with nettles, and its stonewall was broken down. When I saw, I reflected upon it; I looked, and received instruction. ‘A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest,’ Then your poverty will come as a robber, and your want like an armed man.”

**When we become spiritually lazy, we are headed for practical disaster
in our own lives and in our community.**
 - **Hebrews 2:14-15** “Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; And might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.
**The Bible promises that Jesus Christ has rendered the devil powerless.
The only power that he has is that which we give him!**
 - If we hand over our children and our community to the devil, he is all too willing and happy to take them.
 - If we can claim them back in the name of Jesus Christ, walk in the victory and claim the victory, God is all too happy to manifest the victory.
 - **Hebrews 2:16-18** For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation (*satisfy the wrath of God*) for the sins of the people. For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.”

Jesus was tempted in the Garden of Gethsemane, but He won the battle and the victory is ours!

- When you are tempted in the Battle of the Wills, in the Battle of Obedience, for the control of your life, Jesus Christ sympathizes with you and is able to come to your aid in the moment of temptation.
 - **Hebrews 4:15-16** “For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin (*Jesus Christ*). Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.”

**Jesus Christ knows what it’s like to suffer in this world.
He knows what every temptation is like.
He has the victory and is without sin.
He went to the cross to win that victory for you and me.**

When we receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior, when we say, “Jesus, I’m a sinner. Forgive me. Save me!” at that moment we are invited into the throne of grace to receive help in time of need.

No one can help you like Jesus can help you.
Nobody else has ever gone to the cross for you.
Nobody else but Jesus Christ has all authority in heaven and in earth.
He is our Savior and help in time of need.
He is our Rock, our Fortress and our Strong Tower.

Run to your Rock! Engage in the battle! See the victory! Amen! Amen!

Closing Prayer:

Lord, thank You that the battle is Yours. Forgive us when we've been like Peter, sleeping in the Garden. Lord, I pray that You would come and awaken Your people. I ask, Lord, that You would wake us up to the reality of the battle, the lives that have been ravaged and lost. We want to say collectively, "No more of that in our community, God!" You are calling us to fight. You are calling us to pray. Calling us to intercede. Issue the call today. Lord, would you raise up fervent men and women from this congregation at this moment, please? Would You raise up men and women, soldiers of Jesus Christ, ready to do battle on behalf of the lives of others; walking in victory and claiming Your victory; holding Your victory out over this place? Thank You for the cross. Thank You for the forgiveness that we have. Help us to walk in victory. Help us to walk in power. Thank You that You won the Battle of the Wills. We submit our wills to You and say, "Lord, in this church, on this coastline, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Reflect upon the cross and worship. If you have an issue that you need to pray about, this is the place. This is the time. There is a battle for your will, for your obedience. Pray, ask for prayer, and pray for someone else in the community whom you know is struggling, (someone) whom Satan is trying to rip off, steal from, and destroy. Worship and do business with the Lord.

Study Questions:

1. Have you ever experienced the "Garden of Gethsemane," when it felt like the weight of the world was on your shoulder? Was the decision before you so heavy that you hoped for an easier way out? How did you handle it?
2. Are you having trouble walking in victory? How can you fight feeling bound up in the things of the "flesh"? What makes it possible for you to stand by and watch the salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today?
3. Have you ever heard the Lord say, "Sit here and wait for Me." Why do you suppose that this is the hardest thing that we can be called to do?
4. Jesus told His disciples to wait while He went to pray. Is there anything the Lord has told you to do to which you need to be obedient? Is there anything in which you need to be steadfast, faithful, and persistent?
5. How many times have you told yourself that you will stand firm in your walk with God and then fail a short time afterward? Who or what was missing in your life? Were you aware that you had willingly handed power over your life to the devil?
6. How would you know if God has issued you an invitation to go deeper into the Garden of Gethsemane, deeper into the Battle of Wills?