

**God is Master**  
**June 21, 2009**  
**Pastor Cory Hines**

This morning we continue our sermon series as we join again with thousands of churches around the world looking at the One Prayer idea. The theme for this year has been looking at exactly who God is. Churches all around the world have been taking different angles and they've talked about God's all powerful, God's creator, God's provider, God's all these things so this morning we're going to continue with this idea of who God is. As we talk today about the fact that God really is in control. Because we serve a God that's in heaven that really is the one who is in control of our world. If you're like me though, you're a little skeptical at times. Because I look around and wonder is God really in control of this crazy world that we live in right now. I mean you go online or turn on the news you see what's going on around the world and it makes me wonder, exactly is God really in control. If you look at what's going on in Iran and they're trying to do something as simple as have an election, trying to elect some officials and it's crazy over there. They're fighting, they're having demonstrations; people threatening to kill people if they stop demonstrating. You look at what's going on in North Korea and you have their leader saying he is going to make nuclear war heads and we are going to do whatever we want and we don't care what's going on and when I look at that I think God are you really in control of this world. I think about kids here in Ellis County that are raised in a home that doesn't know where their breakfast is coming from; they don't know if they're going to have lunch and I think of situations like that and wonder if God is really in control. You see the AIDs crisis all over the world and you see orphans being raised in these huge orphanages and it really causes me to wonder at times if God is in control. Sometimes even in my own life; situations that I find myself in, I think is He really in control of this situation. We even found out recently that there isn't any good shows on T.V. anymore, the world is so bad that even Jon and Kate plus 8 is messed up! I mean, how bad is our world today when even that show is going downhill? You know when things look bad around us, when situations seem to be negative and things aren't really firing on all cylinders, it's good to get some good advice right? It makes you feel better. Situations not going that well and someone tells you an uplifting word then it will hopefully make you feel better and so advice is always depending upon who gives it to you as to how well it's received. Growing up, I had a mom that was wonderful at sharing advice. That was something that she was really, really good at and even to this very day; she was at my house yesterday for Caleb's birthday she was really good at sharing advice. She's a good godly woman and she's done a good job raising my sister. One of the things that as I think back to some of things that she told me, it really causes me to wonder, did she really have good advice or not? One of the things she told me; this is when I very first started driving was whenever

you leave the house and you're driving somewhere make sure that you have on nice clothes and clean underwear because if the paramedics show up you will want to make sure you have clean underwear on. I thought to myself that was really good advice until I almost had an accident. The minute I almost had a wreck I thought to myself, even if I had clean underwear on, when they showed up they wouldn't have been clean. Is that really important? Back before there were digital cameras and you had to go get the film developed and you didn't know if the pictures were good or not; now we've got to take a picture, look at it while everybody holds the pose, take another picture because it's not good so anyway you'd take these pictures and go down to Wal-Mart and get them developed and my mom would show me these pictures and say things like if you hold your face like this it will stick because I thought it was funny to make faces and things like that. That's not good advice. Have you really ever met anyone walking around making a face all the time? No, your face doesn't stick like that. What about something as simple as good advice such as if you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all? Now, that my friends is some good advice. All of us would cut our word count down from about ten thousand to five a day. Advice is always dependent upon who gives the advice. I wish about twenty years ago someone would have told my family that they is a small town called Frisco, Texas and if you go buy a thousand acres of land your family will never have to worry about money again for the rest of your life. Mortgage everything; do whatever you have to do; rob 7-Eleven but just buy a whole bunch of land in Frisco...now that would be some good advice wouldn't it? What if you just bought some stock in this small company called Microsoft years ago? Again, you would not have to worry about money. Why? That's good advice coming from someone who knows what they're talking about. Fortunately we have the bible that's full of wisdom. Because the bible says there is a man by the name of Solomon that was the wisest person that ever lived. And fortunately we have some of his good advice that he gave us. So this morning with this idea that God is in control, let's find out some of his advice to help us remember that He really is in control. Proverbs, chapter 3 verse 18 says, *"Wisdom is a tree of life to those who embrace her; happy are those who hold her tightly."* See, if you want to remember that God is in control you've just got to remember that wisdom is a good thing; to really strive to be a wise person; to really strive and work hard and fortunately it explains how we can do that because he turns over in Proverbs 4 and he says this, *"Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life."* See, we need to guard our heart because it's what determines the course that our life goes on, because in our minds we know that God's in control. If you were to come in today and we were to take a poll at the door and said is God in control, Yes or no? Almost everyone would have said yes, God is in control. But we don't always feel it right? We don't always feel like God's in control because we don't really believe it in our heart. But he tells us here in Proverbs 4 that if we will guard our hearts; if we will protect our hearts it will then determine the course of our life. We don't know what tomorrow brings; we don't know what situation we are going to face but depending on how

your heart is and what your heart is protected from will dictate how you deal with those circumstances when they show up. So this morning I want to talk about how we can do that because look what he says in Proverbs 17:22, *“A happy heart is like good medicine, but a broken spirit drains your strength.”* Have you ever had one of those days; maybe weeks; maybe months where it feels like everything drains you because you’re in a negative place? You’re not feeling good about yourself; about your life situation and so every day is like you wake up and you go to bed and you’re exhausted because you’ve been drained. Every conversation you have with someone drains you. Any decision that you make; something as simple as what you want for lunch drains you, because you have this heavy heart; this broken spirit that really, really drains you, but this verse tells us if we have a happy heart it is good medicine. He goes on to say in Proverbs 15, *“For the despondent, every day brings trouble; (if you’re despondent or down, every day brings trouble) but for the happy heart, life is a continual feast.”* How about life is a continual feast without the extra pounds? Life is like a continual feast that you never get full, never get satisfied and you never feel stuffed. But he says in Proverbs 15:15 if you are despondent, every day brings trouble. It’s like you take one step forward and then you take two steps back. It’s like you have a good day and the next three are horrible. You have a wonderful week and then the rest of the month stinks. Just when you feel like you’re making progress you end up taking five steps back. Let’s talk about how we can truly guard our hearts.

If you’re going to guard your heart today, the first step is remembering that God chose you. The first step of guarding your heart to try to help you determine the course of your life is remembering that God chose you, specifically; individually. I don’t mean He chose the United States; I don’t mean He chose Waxahachie, I mean He chose you. He chose you; fill in the blank whatever your name is. Look what He says in Ephesians chapter 1 verse 3 and 4. *“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For He chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.”* Boy, it’s nice to be chosen isn’t it? It doesn’t matter what it is, we like to be chose. It could be as simple as when you’re in the fifth grade and you’re picking teams for kickball, you like to be chosen. It doesn’t matter if you’re an adult in a bowling league; you like to be chosen right? It doesn’t matter if you’re trying to go out with a girl; the fact that she chooses you, that’s what you like right? We love to be chosen. This says that we were chose specifically by God. I have a friend of mine who works for a church in Midlothian and he and his wife have two kids and they decided they were going to go on a mission trip to Russia. They go overseas to Russia and they go to this orphanage and as he is describing it, I’m trying to get a mental picture of it in my head but until I go there and see it I really truly can’t grasp it. This is what he talked about...He says that when you go into these orphanages that they have basically like cages from the floor to the ceiling and they have babies in these cages. They have toddlers in these cages because they are so many orphans because they’re so many babies that their parents abandon them. My friend says he walks in this orphanage and its dark

and its musty smelling and there are all these babies that are all by themselves. There is no one there to pick them up and play with them; they're not like our kids that we give presents to and eight months later it's in a garage sale. They are not like our kids who we tell them how smart they are even when they're really not. It's not like our kids who we tell them they are great artists even when really you're thinking...art...not so much for that. They don't have the kinds of things we give our kids in our society. They don't have anyone to pick them up and hold them. They have to have a rotation schedule because there are so many kids and so few workers that kids will go days without having any physical contact. My friend says that he goes over there and while they're over there they meet all these kids and they make a decision as a family that they are going to adopt two kids. The interesting thing to me is he says that a lot of people will go over there and adopt babies because you can get them when they're young and acclimate them to society, but very few people get the older ones like the eight, nine or ten year olds because they don't want the emotional issues they're going to have. So they adopt this nine and ten year old and now they are part of their family and things are great and the kids are doing wonderful. When I think about this passage, that's what I think about because I don't know what it means to be adopted; I don't know what it means for someone to say I choose you. Those kids do. Those kids know what it means to be chosen like that but there is one thing missing how God chose us and it's like this...if my friend shows up from Midlothian and they want to adopt these two kids and the eight and nine year old say that's okay, we don't really want to be adopted. What if these kids says I really don't like your rules and I don't really like the way you're going to raise me and every day when they try to adopt them, they push them away, then ultimately what's going to happen my friends? They are going to choose someone else aren't they? I would. But friends, is that not what we did to God? Is that not what we did to him with the sin in our lives? We know who God is; we know what He wants for us and at some point in time we thumb our nose at Him and say you know what God, I don't want any of that. I don't want to follow your rules; I don't want to follow your ways; I don't want your love; I don't want your grace; I don't want your forgiveness and we just push and push and push Him away. But He continued to pursue us and He continued to choose us. Why; because He loves us. When your world seems like God is distant and God is away from you; He's not in control, remember the fact that in spite of everything that you have ever done and everything that you are, God chose you to be His child. Know and remember the fact that in your heart there is someone that loves you and cares for you and saved you from your sins. Look what He says in Ephesians 1:7-8, *"In Him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavishes on us without wisdom and understanding."* See the key word in that passage is redemption. See God not only chose us and said I want to have a relationship with Cory Hines; but rather he redeemed me from my sins. It's as if I had been convicted of the worst crime you could possibly imagine. I'm sitting there; the jury has found me guilty; I confessed; the judgment phase is here; the jury

comes out and sentences me to life in prison or death penalty and the minute that the verdict is read, the judge stands up and he or she says you know what, we're going to do things a little different. The judge gets off the stage and comes around the back and takes off the robe and puts it on me and moves me to the judge seat and they take my place. That's crazy to think of right? That's crazy to think that a judge would do that for a criminal but you know what? That's what God did for my sins. He took my sin, my mistakes, he took my independence and said I am going to die for that. I am going to redeem him and that just shows you how much God loves you. When your world seems out of control, you've got to guard your heart by first off remembering that He chose you.

The second step in guarding your heart is remembering that God has plans for you. Remembering that God has plans for you will really help you guard your heart. Look what he says in Ephesians 1:11-12, *"In Him we were also chosen, having been predestine according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory."* He says that he predestined according to the plan of him. You see, God already predetermined and already knows and already is familiar with what's going to happen in my life tomorrow. The minute that I was born God knew what my days were going to be like. He gave me free will; I have free choices; I'm free to do with my life as I please but he already knows what my choices are going to be. He already knows the road my life is going to go on. But I want you to know that God sees that we have plans for us to do. When you see this I want you to remember who wrote those. See, the guy who wrote that God has plans for us and predestined us to do things; that comes from Paul the Apostle. When we think about Paul, we think about the guy that started all these churches and wrote all these books in the bible, but I'm going to remind you that before he became a Christian, was not necessarily the greatest guy on the face of the earth. You see because Paul's hobby, his job; what he liked to do in his free time was to kill Christians. That's what he liked to do. He would wake up in the morning and say, what can I do today to try to destroy what God is doing on this earth. That was his whole job, what he loved to do and he would do whatever he could to stop the spreading of the good news. So here is a guy in my estimation that God would frown on; something that God wouldn't like and even in spite of all the bad things he had done in his life; even in spite of the negative things in his life; he said that God predestined him to do good things. Notice how Paul is able to say in spite of what I've done, God can still use me. Notice, how Paul says in spite of my past, God can still use me. Notice how Paul says in spite of who I am, God can still use me. Today, I want to tell you folks that God wants to use you. Not because he needs you. Not because he would like to, but rather he chooses to do that because he knows you are only growing in Christ when he is working through you. There is something about being dependant on God that just makes you grow as a Christian. There is something about saying, okay God I need your help that causes you to grow spiritually. God knows that he has some good plans that he wants for you to do.

There is a friend of mine who lost a loved one and walked through a very difficult season. Radiation, chemo and now God is able to take that pain and take that suffering and that negativity and be able to take that and walk through that same pain with someone else. There are couples in our church that are struggling with each other. They hate each other. When they wake up in the morning, they don't want to be married to each other. The thought of their husband makes them sick to their stomach. The thought of being married to that person for the rest of their life makes them feel trapped but they are able to walk through that with another couple who says this too shall pass. You can make it. Just keep putting one foot in front of the other, just wake up tomorrow, wake up the next day and keep moving. They're able to work through that. There are families that teenagers are going out of their minds and making stupid choices and they have another person in our church whom they know who has gone through that exact same situation that they can talk to and say how did you make. How did you do it? Right now, I want you to know that some of you are in a very negative place in your life right now. You are in such a crazy time that you think that there is no way that God is in control because my world is completely out of control. And you think that there is no way that there is a God in heaven that really is the one who calls the shots on this earth or else I wouldn't be focused on this situation that I'm in right now. But I want you to know that sometimes God uses our pain to help other people. Sometimes God uses the things we go through to walk right beside the pain that people have. Jeremiah 29:11 says this (one of my favorite passages in scripture) *"I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord. Plans to prosper you, not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future."* God didn't create you; God didn't save you from your sins for you to be miserable, downcast, despondent, hating life. He didn't create you for that. He created you because he has great things he wants you to do. He has good things in store for your life and even though you don't feel like it right now, even though your heart doesn't believe it, just remember that God has plans for you. One of my favorite songs that we sing; there's a line in there that says God is still seated on His throne and I love that because see we serve a God that's in heaven and He's just cold chillin', just sitting on this throne; he sees the AIDs crisis in Africa and he's not up pacing, worried. He doesn't see the pain in our society and wondering how it's going to work out. No, God is seated on his throne because he knows how things will ultimately turn out. We serve a God that does not get surprised by anything. God's not in heaven and something negative happened to me and God says...man, I didn't see Cory having to deal with that. No, we serve a God that knows what my tomorrow brings. We serve a God that knows the pain that I have and we have to remember that God is a God who has great plans for us. Listen to what He says in Ephesians 2:10, *"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."* God's already got a game plan for your life. He's already got the good works that he wants you to do. You just got to yield to him and you've got to do it. I've got some bad news and it comes in Proverbs 17:17. It says, *"A friend loves at all times, and a*

*brother is born for adversity.*” There are some of you that were born and went through some adversity and you were born for that for someone else. You went through that pain for someone else. You went through that disappointment, through that hurt, through that dark season of life and you went through all that just junk, according to this passage, for someone else. I want to remind you today that God is in control and you can remember that he is in control and remember that he has plans for you.

The last way that you can protect your heart today and guard our hearts is to remember that God has guaranteed a future for you. He has guaranteed a future for you and when I say guaranteed; I’m not talking about guarantees that we get in our world today like a 100,000 mile warranty. You know it’s going to break down in 100,001 miles. I’m talking about a guarantee that has been sealed irregardless. Ephesians chapter 1 verse 13 says *“Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God possession-to praise of his glory.”* Now, this passage of scripture doesn’t apply to everyone in the world. This passage only refers to us in this room today that know Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior. You see my fear, especially in a crowd like this is that everyone just assumes that their Christians. But you see the bible very clearly says the only way you become a Christian is by stopping, admitting that you’re a sinner, giving your life to Christ and following him. That is the only way you’re a Christ follower. I’m not going to heaven when I die because I’m a pastor. I’m not going to heaven when I die because I went to a bible college. I’m not going to heaven when I die because I try hard. I’m not going to heaven when I die because I’m an American. I’m going to heaven when I die because when I was eight years old at my home church in Vacation Bible School, I remember, right then and there in the fellowship hall it clicked for me. I need to become a Christian. I need to give my life to Jesus Christ. And I’m going to heaven because I made a decision on that day to give my life to him. I want you to know that God is guaranteed a future for all of us we just have to accept it. We just have to receive it so when I read that having believe that you were marked in him with a seal, I am reminded that Jesus marked me as one of his very own. My mom’s side of the family, they are big beef master people. Cows and big farms and I used to love going out there and it was so much fun and riding three-wheelers (that’s before four-wheelers so you could ride on two wheels), learn to drive a tractor and just have a lot of fun. I can remember the very first time I saw my granddad ever brand a cow. I can remember it like it was yesterday. It’s been burned in my mind. Here I am about five years old. I’m a little kid and I’m running around having a good time and here is this cow that five minutes before that was just kind of hanging out in the pasture loving life. He shows up, they get him in a Shute and they clamp him down and he’s probably thinking it’s not the most comfortable position he’s been in. My granddad grabs this branding iron and it is smoking red hot, and I don’t mean that kind of smoking red hot, I mean the other kind of smoking red hot. So he grabs this branding iron and he puts it on that cow and all of a sudden that cow who five seconds

before was just enjoying life, is now the most angry, upset cow you've ever seen in your life because this cow is probably cussing, kicking, snorting. That was a painful process but my granddad did that not because he's a mean guy. He didn't do that because he liked to torture animals, he did that because he wanted everyone to know that that was a Bar L Beef Master cow. He wanted everyone to know that it was my families. That belonged to us; that was ours. Folks, when you give your life to Jesus Christ he burns you as one of His children and whenever your world feels like it is out of control, whenever it feels like things are going crazy, remember that God has a future in store for you. Not because you're a good person, it's because he's burned you as one of His children. If it's January 1<sup>st</sup> of next year, let's pretend, and you have the worst day ever. You wake up with a huge headache, sinus related of course, you get in your car and it won't start, you go and find out you have to borrow your wife's car and you drive it somewhere and you wreck it. Then you get to the grocery store and your debit cards maxed out, then you go home and you find out one of your kids has stabbed the other one in the eye, which that could happen in my house so don't laugh. And then later on that day you come to find out you have roof damage and later on you have a huge flood and you didn't have flood insurance and your house is destroyed. It's the worst possible day you could ever imagine. Let's say February rolls around and our Cowboys are in the Super bowl and they actually show up and play good and they win so we're excited, things are good. March rolls around and you discover the cure for cancer. April rolls around and a distant uncle that you never met that you never even heard of leaves you 50 million dollars. June shows up and all of a sudden they decide to name the city after you because you've done so many great things. Let just say that every month, it keeps getting better and better and better and better. On December 31<sup>st</sup> if I come up to you and say how was your year, you would tell me Cory, it was awesome. It was the best year ever and you start recounting...uncle hooked me up with some money, found the cure for cancer, they named the city after me, you start telling me about your year and all of a sudden I stop and say I thought on January 1<sup>st</sup> this, this and this happened. You say oh yeah, I forgot about that because of all this. I want you to know, some of you today, you feel like January 1<sup>st</sup>. it feels like God's out of control and your world absolutely stinks right now but I want you to know that we serve a God that our future is ten times better than anything we could possibly imagine. God's see's the whole story. We only see right here. We don't see what's going to happen when we receive the inheritance in heaven as God's children. We don't see that and I want to help you today remember that God's in control by taking your eyes off the temporary and focusing on the things that are eternal. When you remember that God is guaranteed a future you can do that. Nathan read this passage of scripture earlier. 1 Corinthians chapter 2 verse 9, *"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him."* Today I want to help you by remembering that fact that God is in control. He really, really is. So therefore you have got to do all you can to

remember that you were chosen, that He has plans for you, but most importantly that God has guaranteed a future for you.