

Lord Teach Us to Pray: Part Three
PRAYER IS ABOUT RELYING

Key Verse: Matthew 6:13

Key Thought: Prayer is about Relying on God

We are in a section of **The Model Prayer** where we are praying about our daily needs. We have called on the Father seeking the supplies we have need of day by day. We have prayed for His forgiveness of those sins that are part of our daily lives as well. Here, we address another need that arises daily. Here, we seek help in our battle with sin and temptation. The first word of our verses is “**And.**” This word ties this request in with our requests for bread, for forgiveness and for grace to forgive others.

As we moved through the phrases that make up this great Model Prayer, we began at the feet of our Father in heaven, praising Him and professing our desire to see His kingdom come and His will done on this earth just as it is in heaven. We have also descended from the mountains of glory into the valley of our daily experience. We have confessed our great dependence upon Him for the necessities of the body and the soul. Now, we descend even further as we consider the possibility that, just as sin has destroyed our past, even greater sins may lie upon the horizon of our lives.

This verse is all about trusting the Lord in the greatest battle we face in life. This is not the battle to put food on our tables or clothes on our backs. This is not the battle to approach God for forgiveness or even the battle to forgive those who have treated us so wrongly. Rather, it is the battle we face every day as we fight the temptations of the flesh and the attacks of the devil. This phrase teaches us that **Prayer Is About Relying**. May the Lord teach us this morning that in the greatest battle of life, we need to learn to rely on Him.

I. THE PROBLEM OF TEMPTATION

The Lord Jesus tells us to pray, *“And lead us not into temptation.”* This simple request literally overflows with meaning. A few minutes spent looking into these words will offer us help in our own battle with temptation.

This statement presumes the leadership of the Lord in our lives. I think we would all agree that our Heavenly Father is a sovereign God. He controls all our life and leads us along. Since this is true, does this also mean that God leads us into places where we are tempted to sin?

The answer to that question is a resounding **“NO!”** James addresses this problem in *James 1:13*;

“When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone.”

When Adam was tempted and fell into sin in the Garden of Eden, he tried to lay the blame at the feet of the Lord.

The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

Genesis 3:12

But the fault did not lie with the Lord. The fault was with Adam and Adam alone!

God never leads us into direct contact with sin, but as we travel the path of life, every crossroad along the way brings with it the option to take a path which leads us away from the Lord’s will for our lives. Every trial we face comes complete with the potential to fail. We may sin, but when we do, the fault lies with us and not with God. So, what is the Lord telling us to pray? Here is what I think: *“Lord, please do not lead us into a trial which will present a temptation stronger than our power to resist it.”* .

Since this is true, then where does temptation come from? Again, James tells us very clearly that temptation arises from within the human heart,

“But each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”

James 1:14-15

You see, this flesh is hopelessly flawed and given over to sin. When temptation comes our way, it is not the devil’s fault; it is not the Lord’s fault; it is not the world’s fault; it is our fault! We have a flawed and fallen nature that craves sin in all its vileness. That is hard to swallow, but it is true, nonetheless.

Temptation in and of itself is not a sin. But the very instant that temptation is embraced and pursued, sin is the result. Take for example David in **2 Samuel 11**. Just seeing Bathsheba on that rooftop bathing in the nude was not a sin. But, when she was desired and pursued, sin had been born, and the end of that sin was death and destruction!

Once, two monks were journeying along a path, when they came to a crossing. There, attempting to cross the same river was a young woman. She was frightened and unable to make the crossing. One of the monks picked her up, carried her across the stream and sat her down on the other side, and the two monks continued their journey. After some time, the other monk turned to the first monk and said, “My brother, I am troubled by something. As you know, our order prohibits us from even looking upon a woman, much less touching one. Yet, you picked that woman up and carried her across that stream and you do not seem to be bothered by your transgression.” The second monk merely smiled and said, “My brother, I put that woman down back by the river’s bank, but you still carry her in your heart.”

That, my friends, is the essence of temptation! It is a problem within man. You see, the heart of the problem is a problem in the heart!

Now, when I pray as I should, I am calling on my Heavenly Father. I am praising Him, seeking His will and confessing my dependence upon Him for every need of life. When I pray, “*Forgive my debts;*” I look back to the past. When I pray, “*Give me this day my daily bread;*” I am looking to the present. But, when I pray “*Lead me not into temptation,*” I am looking to the future.

Having just dealt with the issue of past sins before the Lord, praying this prayer is declaring an awareness that sin may happen again. It also expresses the fear that an even greater sin may occur. Those who have been forgiven at the throne of grace, live in fear of sinning against the Lord who so graciously forgave them. The essence of this prayer is for protection from the sins of the flesh so that God is not dishonored again. No man should face the future without a clear past. But, when sin has been dealt with, the cleansed soul has a deep fear of falling again. Because I love Him, I do not want to hurt Him!

How many of us have been there? We sin and we go to God, confessing it and vowing to leave that sin behind us forever. Yet, before we know it, we have committed the sin all over again. We have all been there! This prayer is a prayer for protection along the way of life. We carry sinful flesh with us every minute we live, and we need help! We need a helper wis greater than we are. We need One who can strengthen us in the times of temptation.

II. THE POWER OF TEMPTATION

The need for us to pray for the Lord's protection from temptation is so great because we are so prone to failure. We have already discovered that our drive for sin; our hunger for sin; our capacity for sin; dwells within our own heart. Temptation is merely an extension of who we are by nature, and that is why it is often so hard for us to resist.

We often say things like, "*Man, the devil really knows what to put in front of me!*" The truth is, it is we and not so much the devil that is the problem. We are only tempted by the things that our own fallen natures desire. That is why temptation has such a strong pull in our lives. You see, what tempts you might not even phase me, and what tempts me might not even be a problem on your radar screen. We are drawn away due to our "*own lusts and enticed,*" *James 1:14*. The word "**enticed**" comes from a word that means "**to bait.**" When we are tempted, the old man is baiting the new man to go back to the old way of life. Of course, when the devil knows what tempts our flesh, he will see to it that those things are constantly placed before us, in the hopes that we will sin and disgrace the name of the Lord.

Temptation is a powerful opponent, but most Christians have no idea as to its real power. Sometimes you hear people say, "*The temptation was so powerful, I just couldn't resist.*" But, in truth, the person who gives in to temptation's allure knows nothing of its power! Only the person who stands against it and wins the victory over it can testify to the great power temptation can wield!

A few years ago, when I was on a trip to Cuba , we were at the seashore taking a little sunshine in , I noticed just how powerful the undertow in the ocean was. When you yielded to its power, it took you where it wanted you to go, and the going was easy. But, when you tried to go against its pull, only then could you feel the real power of the ocean as it tried to force you to go its way.

It is the same with temptation and sin. When we yield to the attractions of the flesh and the world, life is easy, as temptation takes us where it pleases. But, when we stand our ground and refuse to yield to its call, we find out just how much of a pull the flesh and sin has on our lives.

But, thankfully, the power of temptation has no more force in our lives than we allow it to have! If we wish to stand against it, we can! Our Lord has given us some precious promises that serve to strengthen us amid our temptations and guarantee us the victory over them all, if we yield to His will and not to the temptation! What are those promises?

*“When you pass through the waters,
I will be with you;
and when you pass through the rivers,
they will not sweep over you.
When you walk through the fire,
you will not be burned;
the flames will not set you ablaze.”*

Isaiah 43:2

Temptation may be a powerful foe, but it is not in the same league as our Savior! He gives the victory to all those who trust Him for it! What am I saying? You do not have to fall into sin! You do not have to be overcome by temptation. You really can have victory over sin and you can have victory over the enemy in this battle day by day!

III. THE PLEA IN TEMPTATION

This verse closes with the words, “*but deliver us from evil.*” This phrase carries this idea, “*but deliver us from the evil one.*” You see, every Christian has an enemy who hates you and wants nothing more than to see you fall and fail. The ultimate goal of this enemy is to use you to bring disgrace and dishonor to the name of the Lord Jesus and God the Father.

This enemy is the devil, and he desires to see you fail! That is why the Bible tells us that,

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places,”

Ephesians 6:12

Our enemy is not the person who disagrees with us. Our enemy is not the church that has abandoned the old paths to embrace a new Bible and new music. Our enemy is not the charismatic church down the road. Our enemy does not wear a body of flesh and blood. Our enemy is spiritual in nature, and he must be battled with spiritual weapons.

“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

This phrase is a plea for God’s help in the battle with the enemy. When we pray this prayer, we recognize the fact that we are unable to wage this war on our own. Therefore, we call on the name of the Lord, utilizing His power to stand against the devil in the battle with temptation and sin.

This was the method used by the Lord Jesus during His own time of temptation in ***Matthew 4:1-11***. When Jesus was tempted, He turned to the spiritual resources of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God and He made His victorious stand against evil.

Our success lies in doing the very same thing.

We are to use the resources we have been given by the Holy Spirit and in the power of the Word of God. We are to dress up in the “*whole armor*” of God and take our stand, *Ephesians 6:10-18*. By the way, the phrase “**having done all to stand**” has the idea of “**fighting to a standstill.**” We are to take our stand against the flesh and the devil and when we have fought to a standstill, that is, when we have exhausted all our strength, we will find that the Lord is by our side to give us the victory over temptation, sin and Satan! He will not fail us on the day of battle, but He will give us absolute victory for His great glory! After all, He is ever near us, our helper in the battles, and, He has more at stake in our battles that we do!

In Closing, I want to remind you that the victory is ours in the battle with temptation! We are challenged to pray about our need in this battle and we are to trust the Lord to deliver us in the hour of temptation. He will do His part.

But, let me caution you about something. Do not pray this prayer if you plan on placing yourself in places and situations where you will be tempted. For instance, do not pray for the Lord to deliver you from the temptation of lust if you plan on going home and watching pornography! Do not pray for the Lord to deliver you from temptation to commit sexual sin, if you are going to engage in flirtation and sexual activity outside of marriage. Don't pray for the Lord to deliver you from the temptation to drink, if you insist on eating your meals in a bar. Don't waste your time praying this prayer if your feet constantly lead you toward evil.

Do you get the picture? Victory is available, but only those who are serious about waging war on the lusts that dwell within them will experience the Lord's victory.

Do you need help in the battle with temptation? Well, if you are alive, then I assure you that you cannot do it alone! If you need something from the Lord or if you just wish to seek His help in avoiding the pitfalls of sin, then you need to come before Him and look to Him for the strength you need having done all, to stand.

Place: FCA

Date: Sunday, February 1, 2025

Time: 10:30am

After Service: Surrounded (Fight My Battles)