

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lead us not into temptation.



-- Read Luke 11:1-4

-- Pray

-- Song – River

-- Wherever we are, temptation is right there with us.

-- The temptations we face are as new as old as Adam and as new as our last breath.

-- Romans 7:19 – “*What I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.*”

-- In this life, we are constantly engaged in warfare against the temptation to sin.

-- **Big Idea: Pray obediently as a traveler to his infallible guide.**

--The lost and helpless traveler in the dangerous jungle listens very carefully to and follows the directions of his jungle guide.

-- This world is a perilous jungle, and God is our only infallible guide.

-- v. 4 – At first glance, this seems to be a somewhat strange prayer.

-- James 1 vs. Luke 4

-- 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.*”

-- Luke 4:1-2 – “*Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil.*”

-- Are these contradicting notions?

-- In Greek, the word for “trial/test” and the word for “temptation” are the same word.

-- For our good and growth, God certainly leads us into circumstances where we will be tested, but He Himself is never the source of any temptation to sin.

-- In these times of testing, temptation to sin is especially strong.

develop and manage mind-bendingly complicated computer operations, yet we cannot even manage our own evil thoughts?

In short, what is wrong with us? Why are we lovers of lies, makers of malice, and enthusiasts of envy. Why do we desire deceit, foster fear, gather around gossip, and puff up with pride? Why are we so very often so very bad? Well, the long and the short of it all comes down to one short word with long implications: Sin. In other words, the world is so sinful because it is filled with sinners.

-- Jeremiah 17:9 – *“The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?”*

-- Mark 7:20-23 – *“[Jesus] went on: ‘What comes out of a man is what makes him ‘unclean.’ For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man ‘unclean.’”*

-- If we are to really understand what is wrong with the world, we must know and confess that every human being is born a sinner.

-- Because Adam was our predecessor and our representative, when he sinned in the Garden, all of us were made sinners.

-- Christ's righteousness must be imputed to all believers through our *second* birth in Him because Adam's sin has already been imputed to all people through our *first* birth into this world.

-- 1 Corinthians 15:22 – *“For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.”*

Though the world will scoff at this truth, this truth should not sound strange to us, because the mere observation of toddlers irrefutably validates the innate sinfulness of humanity. Think about it: No one ever has to teach his child how to tell lies or to act selfishly. No parent has to sit down and instruct his children about greediness or self-indulgence. We all freely commit these and many other

sins from the very beginning, because from our very beginning, evil desires are right there with us.

- This fundamental truth makes a critical impact on parenting.
 - It thoroughly refutes the modern mantra of parenting, which says, “Let them be what they want and do as they please, because it will turn out okay in the end.”
 - It makes ruin of the notion that our children should be treated as little self-governing gods who are allowed to dictate the terms of their upbringing.
 - Illustration – Johnny Weir’s parent’s misguided insistence that he chart his own course (pretending to be a prancing pony, while the rest of his team played soccer).
 - It is no mystery why children, and adults for that matter, act like we do. We sin because we are all natural born sinners.
- Therefore, left to themselves, all the world’s solutions to the problem of evil are largely, if not entirely, worthless.
 - A. Education: The world has long claimed that education and human ingenuity will rid the world of evil.
 - Examples – NBC’s Public Service Announcements, Meth Billboards, Sex education in the public school
 - However, isn’t it obvious that sex education is not curbing lust? Could it be any clearer that drug education is not halting the problem of addiction?
 - Education is not solving the problem, because ignorance is not causing it. What we have is not an information problem; it is a sin problem.
 - B. Psychology
 - The man who flew into the IRS building after setting his own house on fire (with his own family in it) last week. “What is the problem?” the news anchor asks. “Well, he’s just crazy!” the answer comes. *He is not crazy; he’s evil.*

Psychology cannot cure us because it is not enough for us to be remade. We need to be reborn. We don’t need new ideas rammed into our craniums; we need a new identity rooted in Christ. We don’t need a psychologist; we need a Savior. We don’t need help from a world that is lost; we need new hearts from our Lord who lives. What we need is conversion not worldly conversation!

- Much like analog TV to digital TV or American to European electricity, the goal is unreachable without the converter.
- Do you know humanity's one and only converter, Jesus Christ?
- The conversion without which we simply cannot survive comes only from repentance from sin and sincere faith in Christ.
- If you are not converted in Christ, the trouble of temptation is quite secondary to the fact that you are already dead in your sins.
 - Temptation has already taken root, desire has already conceived, and you are already dead in your sins because your sins remain unforgiven.
 - For those who have not been saved, the only meaning this prayer could possibly have is to cry out for salvation in Christ.
 - Surely, "Lord, save me from death!" is the most urgent and basic form of the prayer, "Lord, lead us not into temptation."
- In its most basic form, "Lead us not into temptation is a prayer for salvation.

2.) This is a prayer for safekeeping.

- When we pray, "Lord, lead us not into temptation," we are voicing a prayer for protection from evil.
 - John 17:15 – *"My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one."*
 - Psalm 64:1-2 – *"O God, as I voice my complaint; protect my life from the threat of the enemy. Hide me from the conspiracy of the wicked, from that noisy crowd of evildoers."*
- Becoming Christian doesn't free us from temptation.
 - Though sin's status changes, its fundamental nature does not.
 - Though we are forever freed from sin's condemnation in heaven, we will still feel its pressure and suffer from its consequences on earth.
 - Though the fully loaded plane soars high in the air, the law of gravity is ever at work, happy to send it crashing to the ground.
 - Although Christ gives us wings to soar above sin's curse, the sinful nature within us and the sin all around us strives to make us fall.
- Thus, this is a prayer for protection against the human weakness within.
- The wisdom and power of God is our only sure defense against temptation.
 - Since the weakness we battle is inherent to all except God, the power we need to overcome it can only come from Him.

- 1 Corinthians 10:12-13 – *“So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to all. You are not tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”*
 - No temptation is unbearable. We sin because we desire to sin.
 - Yet, in Christ, we are promised the power to be victorious in the face of any and every temptation.
- With God’s help, no temptation is too powerful for us to overcome, because we possess the power of Christ in us.
 - 1 John 4:4 – *“You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.”*
 - Although Satan and this world aim to bring us down by temptation, we cannot blame either one when we succumb.
 - James 1:14-15 – *“Each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”*
 - Though aided by Satan and abetted by most everything around us, every single sin remains an inside job.
 - We simply cannot and must not say, “I couldn’t help it.”
- Every single day is a war against sin.
 - Romans 8:13 – *“If you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.”*
 - Although our enemy is a defeated foe and our eternal victory is assured in Christ, the devil still understands our weaknesses and still wages his war, seeking to keep us from the fullness of Christ.
 - If we are dedicated to waging this war for the glory of God, then our practice must mimic our prayer.
 - To truly pray “Lead us not into temptation” requires that we make every effort to avoid circumstances and situations in which we will be unduly tempted.
 - Illustration – Me and sour cherry balls – It is ridiculous to pray, “Lead me not into temptation” while ogling a full bag of them.
 - It is sinful to deliberately place ourselves in the way of temptation.
 - True repentance includes a hatred for the sin we would turn away from and a dedication to entirely avoiding its influence.
 - This is very complicated in our sex-crazed society.

-- “Lead us not into temptation” is a prayer for God to protect and uphold us throughout all the trials and temptation of this life.

3.) This is a prayer for sanctification.

-- There is no sin in being tempted. Jesus was tempted.

-- It's a neutral word, it has no moral connotation whatsoever. It just means a trial, a test, temptation.

-- Temptations and trials don't make us; they reveal us.

-- Luke 6:45 – *“The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.”*

-- Take note when trials come, because it is at those very moments that your truest heart will be on display.

-- Every trial is an opportunity for turmoil.

-- This is obvious to us all, isn't it?

-- This truth is very apparent throughout the course of the Bible.

Because Adam and Eve pursued the temptation of pride, all of the world is poisoned with sin. Because for a moment Moses succumbed to the temptation of power, he struck the rock and surrendered his chance to step foot in the land he had so longed to see. Because David buckled beneath the temptation of lust, an innocent man was murdered and his own child was lost. Because Judas threw himself to the temptation of malice, he will forever be known as history's most treacherous traitor. Because Pilate did not resist the temptation to be loved by men, he presided over the most malevolent murder imaginable.

With those examples in mind, let me ask you, what has giving in to temptation done for you? What stories of sadness or hurt or loss or shame or grief could you tell? What consequences occurred, and what consequences remain? Surely, we must all confess together that chasing after temptation is the road to turmoil, tragedy, and regret. However, just as surely as every trial is an opportunity for turmoil, so too...

-- Every trial is an opportunity for triumph.

Because Noah denied the temptation to doubt, the ark was built and a remnant was saved. Because Joshua surpassed the temptation to scoff, God brought down the walls of Jericho and Israel claimed her promise. Because Samson pushed back the temptation to pout, God pushed down the pillars and buried the Philistines beneath. Because Ruth suppressed the temptation to be selfish, God made her offspring become the heir to His promise. Because Hannah quieted the temptation to quit, God made her son His spokesman to Israel. Because David felled the temptation to fear, God slew Goliath and Israel was saved. Because the Apostle John halted the temptation of hatred, God made him to be the Apostle who taught us to love. Because Our Lord Jesus Christ overcame every temptation known to man without committing even one small sin, you and I can become the righteousness of God.

- Deuteronomy 13:3 – *“The LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul.”*
- God tests us for our good and our growth, and every time we triumph in testing, we become more like Christ in our walk, more effective in our witness, and more complete in God’s joy.
- This is why Scripture can say in James 1:2, *“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds.”*

Now think of the greatest times of real growth in your life. I imagine that most all of them are characterized by tests passed and temptations overcome. Can we not see and confess together today that “temptation” and “trial” are not bad words in authentic Christian living? Oh the grace we will discover and the glory we will know once we learn to view every trial as a blessed opportunity from God to give Him great glory and grow for our good! How very different our attitudes will be when we see every temptation as part of God’s eternal plan to prepare His people for eternity in His presence!

- 1 Peter 1:6-7 – *“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.”*

-- Let us, then, pray to our gracious God, saying, “Lord, lead us not into temptation,” and let us, by the grace of God, live our lives in such a way that we can look back at all our trials and temptations and say to Satan what Joseph so famously said to his brothers in Genesis 50:20: “*You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good.*”

-- Pray

-- Jude 1:24-25 – “*To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.*”