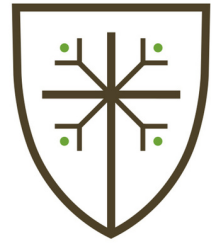


SERMON NOTES



The Lord's Prayer *Fall Sermon Series*

November 5, 2023

SERMON INFO

TITLE

"A Prayer for the Tempted"

PREACHER

Rev. Brent Baker

TEXTS

Genesis 3:11-15

James 1:2-4, 12-15

Matthew 6:9-13; 26:38-41

DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. There are two methods of overcoming temptation that Brent talked about that eventually fail us. What are they centered around? How does putting our trust and finding our strength in Christ differ?
2. How is it that, "when we face trials of many kinds," we can consider them pure joy as it says in our epistle passage from James?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

We are approaching the end of our sermon series on the Lord's Prayer; and, this week, Brent lead us in looking at a petition for another of our basic human needs, a prayer for protection. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. First, what is temptation and second, how do we overcome it?

What is temptation?

The Greek word that is translated as "temptation" here in the gospel of Matthew is a bit ambiguous, with two seemingly contradictory interpretations. It can be translated as trial and as temptation. Trials have a difficult but positive connotation. Trials come from God and their goal is to build up. While temptation comes from evil and leads toward destruction and death.

The Bible always presents trials as a pathway toward spiritual maturity and life. But not temptation. Temptation is always partnered with evil or, more specifically, with the evil one. It often takes the form of over-desiring good things – something you thought you had control over that now has control over you. Temptation plays on our wants and our wounds and, unlike trials through which you grow and your sin is put to death, in temptation, your sin grows and you die.

How do we overcome it?

There are a number of ways that we seek to overcome temptations. The first is by dismissing them, telling ourselves (and others) that it's not a problem. The second, and all too common among Christians, is exertion. We try everything from removing every hint of the temptation to joining every group and Bible study. And, as Brent said, in the throws of temptation, this is good and right and effective. But the problem is it only works intermittently. It is unlivable, and unsustainable. There must be a better way, and that better way is not exclusion but substitution.

Namely, the substitution Christ accomplished for us on the cross. Christ's death on the cross was not just a payment for sin but conquered something. We pray "deliver us from the evil one" and that is what happened on the cross. It was more than just substitution of Christ for sinners, it was a conquering of evil.

Christ endured the temptation he faced without sin and through him, God was disarming the rulers of evil in this world. And when Christ returns it will not be as a lamb slain but as a warrior conquering over evil. It is only in him and in his conquering of the evil one that we are given the power over temptation and strength through trial.