

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil

1. Intro: What is temptation?
 - A. Does God tempt us?
 - a. James 1:13 *Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.*
 - b. Matt. 4:1 *"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil."*
 - c. How do we reconcile these?
 - B. Two meanings of peirazó (pi-rad'-zo)
 - a. Negative: Entice, lure, trip up
 1. Goal is destruction
 - b. Positive: Test, prove, try
 1. Goal is to strengthen, build up
 - A. James 1:2-4,12 *Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing... Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him*
 - c. A thin line between trial and temptation
 1. Thomas Brooks (1608-1680): *"Times of affliction often prove times of great temptations, and therefore afflictions are called temptations."*
 - C. Yes, God does sometimes lead us into places of temptation.
 - a. Adam & Eve
 - b. Job
 - c. Abraham
 - d. Peter
 - e. Jesus
2. So why ask if testing is for our good?
 - A. Admission of our frailty
 - a. On the heels of "forgive us our debts" — we are needy!
 1. Three petitions for ourselves: Provision, Pardon, Protection
 - A. All show our dependence on him
 - b. It is not wrong to ask to be spared from trials
 1. He is mindful that we are but dust
 - A. Romans 7:21-24 *So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?*
 - B. "Do not flatter yourself that you can hold out against temptation's power. Secret lusts lie lurking in your own heart which will never give up until they are either destroyed or satisfied. Am I a dog, that I should do this thing? asks Hazeel (2 Kings 8:13). Yes, you will be such a dog, if you are like the king of Syria. Temptation and self-interest will dehumanize you. In theory we abhor lustful thoughts, but once temptation enters our heart, all contrary reasonings are overcome and silenced." — John Owen
 2. We are grieved by our sin (forgive us our debts), and don't want to repeat it!
 3. Even as we ask, we remember that God works all things, especially trials for our good.
 - B. Continued reflection on our sin
 - a. Past sins are dealt with, but here we *wrestle* with sin through prayer.
 1. After receiving forgiveness, use your self-examination in prayer to prepare in the Spirit for the next battle.
 2. Meditate on temptation while in prayer, while repenting
 - A. Prayerfully consider the means of resistance
 - a. James 4:7-8a *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.*
 - b. 1 Peter 5:8-11 *Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*
 - B. "What settings are you in when you fall? Avoid them. What props do you have that support your sin? Eliminate them. What people are you usually with? Avoid them. There are two equally damning lies Satan wants us to believe: 1) Just once won't hurt. 2) Now that you have ruined your life, you are beyond God's use, and might as well enjoy sinning. Learn to say no. It will be of more use to you than to be able to read Latin." — Charles Spurgeon.
 3. Prime: "Neglecting to pray this petition we are likely to forget the daily spiritual battle in which we are engaged."
 - A. We must always be looking ahead to the next battle
3. Deliver us from evil
 - A. Evil or Evil One?
 - a. Importance of remembering our enemy
 1. Calvin: "It does not matter very much whether by the word 'evil' we understand the devil or sin itself. For Satan is the enemy who contrives our ruin, while sin is the weapon he uses to oppress and slay us. This, then, is what we ask:

that we may not be overcome and defeated by any temptation, but that, in our Lord's might, we may stand firm and strong against all hostile powers, which is what not yielding to temptation means; so that, committed to his care and fortified by his protection and defense, we may have victory over sin, death, the gates of hell and the devil's entire domain. That is what it is to be delivered from the evil one."

A. "All hostile powers" includes the world, the flesh and the devil

- a. "When we realize a constant enemy of the soul abides within us, what diligence and watchfulness we should have! How woeful is the sloth and negligence then of so many who live blind and asleep to this reality of sin. There is an exceeding efficacy and power in the indwelling sin of believers, for it constantly inclines itself towards evil. We need to be awake, then, if our hearts would know the ways of God. Our enemy is not only upon us, as it was with Samson, but it is also in us."

B. Satan is active and his purpose is to destroy, but God is sovereign

a. Job

1. God initiates!
2. Job is successful for a while, but falters in the end
3. God delivers

b. Jesus

1. Matt. 4:1 *"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil."*

A. Left him until a more opportune time...

- a. Jesus was tempted in ways similar to the wilderness throughout his life, frequently faced with physical wants, demands for spectacular signs, desire to avoid the suffering of the cross...

B. Jesus prayed in the face of temptation and was answered.

- a. Hebrews 5:7 *In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.*

c. Simon Peter

1. Luke 22:31-34 *"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers." Peter said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death." Jesus said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me."*

C. Remember that God's deliverance is guaranteed for those who put their trust in him

a. *Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!*

b. Godliness, like forgiveness, is a gift of grace

1. Titus 2:11-14 *For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.*

4. Doxology

A. Kingdom

a. He has authority!

1. "If a rhinoceros were to enter this restaurant now, there is no denying he would have great power here. But I should be the first to rise and assure him that he had no authority whatever." — G.K. Chesterton
2. He has the right to answer these petitions, and he is a good and gracious king

B. Power

a. He is able

C. Glory

a. He is motivated by his own glory — he has glorified his name, he will glorify it again!