

P590

GRACE NOTES PROGRAM

SERIES: THE LORD'S PRAYER

TOPIC: Deliver us from evil - part 11

INTRO: Welcome to Grace Notes, brought to you by Sandbek Ministries. James 5:13 says...

Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray...

Jesus knew that His followers would face difficulties in this world, so He instructed them, and us, in his model prayer found in Matthew 6:13, to pray...

...lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Before we begin, let's look at the word, 'temptation'. It is used in several ways in the Bible. There are temptations from God, temptations from satan, and in general, temptations that arise from the world's enticements which play on our own lusts.

A temptation from God is 'a trial or proving of man's integrity or virtue, which aims at an ultimate spiritual good'.

A temptation from satan is 'an enticement to sin or do evil'.

In THIS phrase, it is important to note that the line, 'deliver us from evil' is translated in the NIV this way...deliver us from The Evil One.

With this in mind, let's join our host, Barbara Sandbek as we study this request further.

The natural inclination in interpreting this phrase may be to think that God would tempt us to do evil, so we're to ask Him not to. But in comparing Scripture with Scripture, we find this can not be the case. Psalm 5:6 says that God hates evil and Isaiah 31:2 says He punishes it. So, then, why would he lead those He loves into it? Romans 8:1 says that there is no condemnation for them that are in Christ.

Listen to what James 1:13-14 has to say...

When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me."
For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;
but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is
dragged away and enticed.

I once heard the progression described this way. Let's say God brings a time of testing into our life – like a financial difficulty. He knows we can deal effectively with it if we rely on Him to show us how. It can also be an experience where we'll know Him more fully. But, the tax bill is due and we figure we could pay less if we didn't claim all our income. That's a natural inclination coupled with an evil enticement from satan. It's important to note that even though this thought crossed our mind, it doesn't mean we've sinned. However, if we enter an incorrect figure, we've conceived the desire and therefore sinned. From there, if not confessed and made right, it leads to broken fellowship with the Lord.

God designs trials specifically for where we are in our Christian walk. He gears them so we'll succeed and end up more like Christ, who was tempted in all ways, just like we are, yet didn't sin. Abraham and Job, both went through some difficult times of testing from God and ended up the better for it.

James 1:2-4 tells us how to look positively at trials...

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 12:10...

...for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

The only way we can relate to Paul is after we've been through a trial, watched God work, and found that we are the stronger for it.

*** STRONGER FOR IT ***

The way I'd express this request is, "Lord, do whatever it takes to keep me from yielding to temptation." In fact, the New Living Translation reads..."Don't let us yield to temptation." John Gill's exposition says...

'Do not lead me, into the power of it, so as to be overcome by it, and sink under it...We are not here taught to pray against temptations...for they are sometimes needful and useful; but that they may not have the power over us, and destroy us.'

But it's a two-way street, like the rest of the requests we're instructed to make in this model prayer. We must do our part because God gave us a will and therefore, a choice. In some cases, depending on our bent towards certain evil temptations, we may have to ensure that we don't put ourselves into tempting situations, or have things around us that would lure us.

I love this story I heard recently. A lady was dangerously overweight and decided to go on a diet. She told everyone in her office about it. However, the following day, she came in with a box of donuts, as usual, and consumed several herself. When confronted, she said, "I figured if the Lord didn't want me to stop at that donut shop, He wouldn't have provided a parking place in front. And would you know, after seven times around the block there was a space." Now I know, we laugh at this, but don't we do the same thing?

James 4:7 says...resist the devil and he will flee from you. But, before this command, it says...Submit yourselves to God.

Jesus, Himself, warned His sleepy, overly self-confident disciples with these words recorded in Matthew 26:41...

"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

1 Cor. 10:13, one of my favorite, “it won’t get too tough verses”, is helpful. It reads...

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be 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.

This is truly consoling. It reminds us that only God can keep us pure. He does this through the power of the Holy Spirit He placed inside us when we received Jesus as our Savior. We CAN say ‘NO’ to wrong and ‘YES’ to right things.

2 Peter 2:9a says the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations.

The apostle Paul knew what it was like to struggle with temptation. but he also knew Who could deliver Him. He wrote in Romans 7...

...I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.

For 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.

He concludes...

Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

King David understood this and wrote Psalm 18:2...

The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge.

God so beautifully assures him and us in Psalm 91:14-15...

"Because he loves me," ... "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him.

We, too, need deliverance and now we know where to find it.

MY DELIVERER

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