

RESISTING FOR THE LORD

Matthew 6:13a: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil...."

Luke 11:4b: "...And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil."

This part of the Lord's Prayer carries a dual message and dual application. "Temptation" is an English translation of the word *peirasmos*, from *peirazo*, which means to make trial of, try, tempt, prove, in either a good or bad sense. Three times in the first chapter of James, verses 2, 3 and 12, we see temptation is used in the dual meaning: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." Here we see the temptation is a test that actually strengthens your faith. Then we read further in verse 13, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." Here we observe that God will never tempt you to do wrong. Never! Not to overcomplicate this, I believe you can see both uses, i.e., temptation to do wrong or temptation, meaning to endure the trial God has chosen for you. So, on one hand, we are praying to not come into the presence of evil that would seduce and on the other, we are praying for God to teach us in prayer through Divine wisdom what we would otherwise have to learn in a trial.

1. GOD WANT US TO AVOID ALL AVENUES THAT LEAD TO SIN.

1 Thessalonians 5:22: "Abstain from all appearance of evil." There is a simple illustration that speaks to this; the story is told of an evangelist about to leave for a meeting. His wife notices as he is packing, he is holding one of his white shirts to the window. His wife inquires what he is doing and he replies, "I'm trying to see if this shirt is dirty." Without hesitation she said, "If it's doubtful, it's dirty."

Proverbs 4:14, 15: "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." One of the best examples of wisdom in overcoming temptation is given to us in Genesis 39:10-12:

"And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her. And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out."

2. GOD WILL MAKE A WAY FOR THE OBEDIENT CHRISTIAN TO ESCAPE SIN'S SNARE.

I Corinthians 10:13: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

II Peter 2:9, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."

We see from the Scriptures contextually, that God is very much interested in delivering us from the very presence of temptation. God is at least six times more interested in delivering us from the presence of temptation than He is in delivering us from the power of temptation. I say this because of the six times the Lord uses the word "temptation" compared to I Corinthians 10:13:

Matthew 6:13a: "And lead us not into temptation...."

Matthew 26:41a: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation...."

Mark 14:38a: "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation...."

Luke 11:4b: "...And lead us not into temptation...."

Luke 22:40a: "Pray that ye enter not into temptation...."

Luke 22:46b: "...rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

If we are not looking for a way out of the presence of temptation, God is not obligated to deliver us from the power of temptation. It is presumptuous to place ourselves in a place of testing to do wrong, believing we will have the power to overcome (on our own) the power of temptations. Psalm 19:13: "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression."

3. THERE IS DELIVERANCE FROM THE TEMPTATION WHEN IT IS A TRIAL OF OUR FAITH.

In I Kings 19 we see the mighty prophet Elijah has stayed strong until Jezebel threatens his life. He winds up under a juniper tree, exhausted and undone. Elijah does not request to be taken out of the fight; he requests to be taken completely out of life! And the Lord in His tender care, allows Elijah to get rested and even miraculously feeds him. Then Elijah is supernaturally strengthened and runs to Horeb (Sinai), the mountain of God. Again God's overwrought prophet must be strengthened again, so God speaks to Elijah in a still, small voice. Then at the end of the chapter, God gives Elijah some aid by sending Elisha. Here is a simple observation that is available not only to Elijah, but to anyone needing deliverance from the trials that God has permitted to come your way. When tested, pray for deliverance and:

- A. Get rested and refreshed (Psalm 127:2).
- B. Listen for God's voice (Mark 4:9).
- C. Be ready to receive reinforcements (Ecclesiastes 4:10).

4. THERE IS A BEHEST BEHIND THE REQUEST FOR DELIVERANCE FROM EVIL.

Matthew 26:41: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Mark 14:38: "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak."

Psalm 103:14: "For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."

The late Dr. Ray Stedman said, "I confess I have puzzled and prayed and read about this, and I am convinced that what He means here is that this is a prayer to be kept from unrecognized temptation. When temptation is recognized as such, it can be resisted, and when we resist, it is always a source of strength and growth in our life."

Here's the point: we realize God wants to keep us from sin. We also want to keep from sin. But there are traps to do wrong, set up by Satan. And there are traps for depression. And in our human weakness we do not always recognize when we are getting close to doing wrong or going into depression. So, we are to be praying for wisdom to discern and circumvent the trouble areas. Peter is the perfect example. He promised the Lord, "...Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended" (Matthew 26:33b). The Lord rebuked Peter in Mark 14:30: "And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice." When Peter was in the garden with our Lord, he foolishly pulls out his sword to defend Jesus. But soon he is lying to a young maiden that he was not part of the disciples. Peter was caught off guard - he was not ready for the trial. As we examine the Scriptures it seems apparent that the prayer of our text is a prayer for wisdom readiness in all circumstances and situations.

Conclusion:

In 1346, during the Hundred Years' War, the English army of King Edward III met a French battalion at Crecy, France. The King's son, Prince Edward, led one vital division of the British force while Edward III stood nearby with a strong band of soldiers, ready to send relief if needed. Soon after the battle started, the prince thought he was in danger, so he sent for help. But the king didn't come. Young Edward sent another message, pleading for immediate assistance. His father responded by telling the courier, "Go tell my son that I am not so inexperienced a commander as not to know when help is needed, nor so careless a father as not to send it."

Matthew 6:8b, "...Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him."

-Pastor Pope-