

HC 127 – Pray for Strength to Stand up to Our Enemies

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. God commands you to **make his name holy**.
2. But for God's name to be made holy, you have to **build his kingdom in your heart, church, and country**.
3. To build his kingdom **you must teach, believe, and live God's will – which is the Gospel**.
4. In order to do God's will **you need a sufficient supply of food and material things**.
5. But to get food and material things to build God's kingdom, **you need to be close to him by getting his fatherly forgiveness**.
6. But for you to stay away from sins and stay close to God **you need help when you are tempted to stray**. This is the last petition of our prayer. Hear about this today.

Our headings are:

Lord, Our Spirits Are Weak

Lord, Our Enemies Are Strong

Lord, Only You Are Able

Our goals are: That you may recognize that even though you are a child of Christ, you daily **need to be preserved from, or preserved through, temptations in order to be close to God and fulfill your covenant duties to Christ**.

127 Q. WHAT DOES THE SIXTH REQUEST MEAN?

A. *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil* means, by ourselves **we are too weak** to hold our own even for a moment. And our sworn **enemies– the devil, the world, and our own flesh**– never stop attacking us. And so, Lord, **uphold us and make us strong** with the strength of your Holy Spirit, so that we may not go down to defeat in this spiritual struggle, but may firmly resist our enemies until we finally win the complete victory.

Lord, Our Spirits Are weak

1. Because you are spiritually weak and yet have great responsibilities placed on you, you need God's help.

So pray for him to save you from facing temptation and deliver you when you are in temptation so you don't sin.

2. But let's clear up a common confusion: Does God tempt you?

God does not tempt you; God tests you. The Devil tempts you. What is the difference?

Testing, what God does, is to make you better...as you might put gold through fire to make it purer.

Tempting, what the Devil does, is a lure to make you do wrong things – it is an attempt to “sever the bond that exists between you and God.”

Do you want the details?

3. God tests you to refine you!

God prunes you by testing you so you will produce better – like a man prunes a grape vine.

James 1:13 - Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.

God tested Abraham by telling him to go and sacrifice Isaac to solidify Abraham's faith.

God tested his people in their giving in Malachi 3. He said: Test me and see if I wouldn't bless your obedient giving! This was to strengthen their faith.

God tests you to show you how sinful they are...and how much you need a Savior...surely a good thing.

Ecclesiastes 3:18 I said in my heart, "Concerning the condition of the sons of men, **God tests them**, that they may see that they themselves are like animals."

4. The Devil tempts you to destroy you – like he tempted Job through his wife to “save himself from his pain,” and to curse God and die.

The Devil tempted Jesus – all 3 times trying to get Jesus to cut short his work and avoid the cross.

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

So when he pretended to care about Jesus' hunger, he was trying to remove the Bread of Life from the starving world.

5. But, as a Christian, be comforted knowing even when you are tempted by Satan, he is limited by God.

The Lord knows that **you will never be able to stand up for a minute – a second – to the Devil’s temptation** because you are weak. So he strengthens and keeps you...as you draw strength from him.

John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for **without Me you can do nothing.**

And in fact, the Lord will make a way of escape even when you do face temptation.

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, **that you may be able to bear it.**

6. There is a personal obligation in making this 6th petition you must not miss: If you are praying to be saved from temptation or saved through temptation, you are, in reality, praying for wisdom not to put yourself in positions where you are tempted.

So don't pray to be saved through temptation and **then go to places where others can lure you.**

Don't drink and drive and then ask God to take you home safely.

Do put yourself in an unhealthy position and ask God to keep you from adultery.

Don't put your computer in a secret place and ask God to protect you from watching inappropriate things.

If you do these things, how can you ask God for help in those situations? That would be presumptuous.

Lord, Our Enemies Are Strong

1. You need protection from temptation or be saved through temptation because your enemies are dangerous-dangerous in the worst sense of the word-not like it is dangerous to eat trans fats.

These 3 enemies will put your life in mortal danger if you let them guide you.

a. The Devil. He is the perennial enemy of believers. He never ever stops! Note 3 things about him!

2Corinthians 11:14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an **angel of light.**

Ephesians 6: 10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the **wiles of the devil.** 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

1Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a **roaring lion,** seeking whom he may devour.

The **Lord was not speaking of “evil” in general, but rather, he was speaking of the Evil One.** The Devil is the personification of evil.

b. The World. “World” refers to **the system that is under the dominion of the Devil:** false religions, secular culture, evolutionists, evil movie makers and writers, many university professors, some political institutions, etc.)

These are the Devil’s infants and institutions. They lure people into sin.

A good example of this is how most young people now believe in socialism...an inherently evil thing...and they are now fighting for it!

John 15:18 "If **the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before** it hated you. 19 "If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, **but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.**

c. Your own Flesh is an enemy from which God must deliver you – your own flesh which has been corrupted by the Devil. **Christians like to go back to their past owner!** We are like dogs that go back to their vomit!

Romans 7: 23 But I see another **law in my members, warring against the law of my mind,** and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

2. The Scriptures shows the strength of your enemies so you would look to all-powerful God for strength.

These are not uncommitted enemies who might leave if they can't win – like mercenaries might do. **These enemies stay and hound you. They will war against you till you die.**

So make this prayer until you die. It doesn't matter how spiritual you might think you are, you will be tempted by these enemies.

The aged lust. Old women steal. Children covet. Sin never leaves you alone.

Lord, You Are Able

1. You acknowledge by this petition (lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one) only God is able to save you from temptation because you are weak and your 3 enemies are deadly.

Jesus prayed for help from this Father and was strengthened and he urged his disciples to do the same.

Matthew 26: 41 **"Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."**

Only the weak need strengthening; only the dirty need to be cleaned.

1Thessalonians 5: 23 Now **may the God of peace** Himself sanctify you completely; and may your **whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless** at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord is the one who is able to keep you from stumbling...from giving in to temptation.

Jude 1: 24 Now to Him who is **able to keep you from stumbling,** And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy...

2. God is not only able, but willing to save you through your temptations.

1Corinthians 10: 13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, **but with the temptation will also make the way of escape,** that you may be able to bear it.

There is no worse feeling than being abandoned by a loved one.
This is why children of broken homes often have so many struggles.
This is why divorcees can struggle so much.

But your heavenly Father will never abandon you.

And when you are worried, remember Jesus' words. God takes care of the birds, he will take care of you, and his Spirit fills your heart in order that you have boldness through all temptations. **He is your Father!**

3. Be encouraged that even throughout your temptations you'll have confidence—for God enables you by his Holy Spirit to keep a smile on your face knowing you can come through your tests successfully.

Romans 5: 3 And not only that, **but we also glory in tribulations,** knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

You can even rejoice through your temptations, knowing they are for your good.
They bring rewards.

Conclusion:

No Christian man, woman, boy, or girl can endure temptations. You give in and sin against the Lord. You can't win because the Devil, the world, and your own flesh, are stronger than you, and by yourself, you wouldn't last a minute against them.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Humbly ask God to avoid temptations or to remain faithful when you are tempted.

Admit you are needy and cannot survive without his help.

Yes, **you are tempted** by the movies you watch, by the books you read, by lust for the opposite sex, by money, by a desire for recognition, and by power.

Pray you can look at the storm of temptation that wants to overwhelm you and that you can stick your finger in its eye, knowing victory is certain with your Father's help.

2. If you don't pray this prayer, if you allow yourself to give into temptation, you will be weakened and unable to fulfill your duties in kingdom building.

You wouldn't be able to stay close to God.

You won't have your needs met. You won't promote the will of God.

You won't love his kingdom.

And you won't care if God's name is hallowed.
But you should! And so you pray.

3. Remember, you are only able to make this petition because you were saved and adopted as a child of God through Jesus!

Finally, a note to non-Christians: Though we as Christians fail God and give into temptations, we are forgiven because we are his children. **You are not his child, so you will not be forgiven.** Every sin you commit in thought, word, and actions, will be held over your head. **The only way of escape is to ask God to make you his child because Christ took the punishment for sins.** If you do this, he will save you and adopt you as his child forever.