

HC 127 – Help: We are weak; our enemies are strong; You are able

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: You want the world to hallow God's name. But for God name to be hallowed, his kingdom must come. For his kingdom to come, his will must be done (his Word must be preached and obeyed). To do his will you need your daily needs met. And for your needs to be met you have to be close to God...having your sins forgiven.

But for you to stay away from sins and to stay close to God **you need to be protected from temptation and raised up when you yield to temptation.** This is the last petition of our prayer and this is what you will hear about today.

Our headings are:

Lord, We 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, We are weak

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

You need to pray for him to save you from facing temptation.

You need him to deliver you when you are in a temptation so that you don't sin.

2. Before we go on, let's clear up a common confusion. Does God tempt you?

No. Does the Devil tempt you? Yes. The Devil tempts you but God tests you. What is the difference?

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.”

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

Does the Bible really teach this distinction between tempting and testing? Yes! Look at the facts!

3. God tests you to refine you!

You can say that he prunes you by testing you so you will produce better – like a man prunes a grape vine. But know for sure: God does not tempt. God tests his children.

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.**

Consider a few real life examples: **God tested Abraham** by telling him to go and sacrifice Isaac. That surely solidified Abraham's faith. **God tested his people in** their giving in Malachi 3. He says: Test me and see if I wouldn't bless your obedient giving! (Faith strengthening.) **But God also tests you to show you how sinful they are...**and how much you need a Savior.

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,” (which was rebellion) and to curse God and die.

By God's grace, Job resisted...

Another example is when **the Devil tempted Jesus to short cut 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.**

The Devil pretended to care about Jesus' hunger, but he really wanted to remove the Bread of Life from the starving.

5. But be comforted knowing that even when you are tempted by the Devil, 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. 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 request (Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.) that 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 were you are tempted.

So don't pray to be saved through temptation and **then go to places where others can lure you. Avoid friends that drink too much...or watching TV too much or watch bad things on it... Avoid putting your computer in a secret place...**

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

Lord, Our Enemies are Strong

1. The next reason you need to be protected from temptation or be saved through temptation is because your enemy is dangerous-dangerous in the worst sense of the word-not like it is dangerous to eat Trans fats.

There are 3 enemies that every Christian will face in his life every day that can put his life in mortal danger.

a. The Devil – he is the perennial enemy of God's people. He never ever stops!

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.13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

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

The context of the Lord's Prayer tells you that **the Lord was not speaking of "evil" in general, but rather, he was speaking of the Evil One.** You need deliverance from the Devil. He 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, many movie makers, evil writers, some political institutions, etc.) These are the Devil's infants and institutions. These things and people are diametrically opposed to everything Christian. They make 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...and eat what the Devil says!

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.

Galatians 5:17 For **the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh**; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

2. The Scriptures take time to show the strength of your enemies so you would look to 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.** This means you need to 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. So you see why you need to make this petition!

Lord, You are Able

1. You acknowledge by this petition (lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one) that only God is able to save you from temptation – knowing your own weaknesses and the strength of your 3 deadly enemies.

Even Jesus prayed often 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.**"

As Apostle Paul closed his letter, he prayed for Thessalonians to get God's help to clean their souls and bodies of sin! 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.

Jude confirmed that the Lord is the one who is able to keep you from stumbling...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.

This is why even while **Jesus was on earth he prepared his people to learn dependence on the only one who would be able to keep them through troubles and temptations.**

(They were tempted to deny him.)

Matthew 10: 19 "But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; 20 "for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

The Holy Spirit fills your heart in order that you have boldness through all temptations.

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 all 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.

And notice that you can even rejoice through your temptations, knowing they are for your good.

Conclusion:

No Christian man, woman, boy, or girl can endure temptations. You give in and sin against the Lord every single time. You can't win because your 3 enemies, the Devil, the world, and your own flesh, are stronger than you and 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 when you are tempted to remain faithful to him.

Admit that you are desperately needy and cannot survive without his help. Yes, it is hard to admit you are needy, but you are. **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 that you can look at the storm of temptation that wants to overwhelm you and that you can stick your finger in its eye knowing that victory is certain through 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 wouldn't care if God's name is hallowed. But you should! And so you pray.

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

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. I pray that God will give you the grace to ask him to adopt you.