

Preacher's Pen points

"Lead Us Not Into Temptation; But Deliver Us From Evil"



Jesus' model prayer not only reveals the simplicity with which we should pray, it also reveals the spirituality with which we should approach God. It reminds us of the power of the tempter to deceive and destroy. However, we do not have to struggle with him alone! Thankfully, the Lord has promised to help us! Jesus in this petition teaches us how to appeal to God for that assistance.

What does it mean?

The words *"lead us"* suggest **the need for God's guidance in the decisions of life**. *"It is not in man that walks to direct his steps"* (Jer. 10:23). We need to look to God to show us the course we should take. We must seek *"to abstain from every form of evil"* (1 Thes. 5:22) and to *"please him in all respects"* (Col. 1:10). We must be constantly in touch with the words of the Lord, reading and meditating upon them constantly, since they reveal the path we should walk (Ps. 119:105).

The words *"deliver us"* suggest **the need for God's power in the dangers of life**. Truly *"the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak"* (Mt. 26:41); but God *"is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us"* (Eph. 3:20). God's power is exerted within us as we are *"strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man"* (Eph. 3:16). But addition, God's power is exerted around us as He places limitations on Satan's attempts to destroy us. He promises to never allow Satan to test us with temptations beyond common human experience or which have no way of escape: *"There is no temptation that has overtaken you but such as is common to man and God will with every temptation make a way of escape that you may be able to bear it"* (1 Cor. 10:13). With this assurance we may face life's

tests with confidence and hope of deliverance.

How Can We Apply it?

James offers some practical suggestions that will help us live in the spirit of this petition.

- Accept life's tests with joy knowing that they will make you a better person (Jas. 1:2-4).
- Ask God for wisdom so that you may know how to overcome them (Jas. 1:5-8).
- Take time to cherish and be thankful for the spiritual blessings you possess, regardless of your physical condition (Jas. 1:9-11).
- Look to the reward God has promised to those who endure (Jas. 1:12).
- Don't blame God when you are tempted and fail; but do thank him for the good gifts He gives and for seeking to save you from your sins (Jas. 1:13-18).
- Be quick to hear what God says, slow to talk back, and slow to get angry when you don't agree (Jas. 1:19).
- Instead of resisting the truth, put away evil, and receive with meekness the implanted word (Jas. 1:21).
- Don't just be a hearer of the word; be a doer of the work God commands (Jas. 1:22-25)

As we apply these practical exhortations, the petition of Jesus' model prayer will be answered in a wonderful way. Instead of being overcome by sin, we will be *"unspotted by the world"* (Jas. 1:27). Let's pray for it, and then let's live it!

--Johnny Felker