

Deliver Us from Evil

*Father,
deliver us from the evil one today.
I ask not only for myself, but for
my wife,
my son,
my daughter,
my brothers and sisters in Christ.
Protect us, Lord.
Help us to watch and pray.*

The Need

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. (Matthew 6:13, NIV)

After we ask God to forgive our wrongs, we ask Him to help us avoid them in the future.

Face it: without God's grace, sin is a debt we cannot pay and a trap we cannot avoid. We are opposed and surrounded by spiritual forces much stronger than us. We are weak, and our *enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour* (1 Peter 5:8, NIV).

But the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world (1 John 4:4). Deliverance is always available as we trust our Heavenly Father who is always able, always with us, always in us. That is the beautiful message of the Lord's Prayer.

In all our weakness, we can live in constant, close fellowship with a holy God. Christ has fully provided us that amazing privilege by His forgiveness and His Spirit within.

What hinders us? We get our eyes off God and onto lesser things. We forget that our greatest need is not comfort or respect or any of the "necessities" of life. Our greatest need is our own weakness. Our greatest need is the sin, the faithlessness, the lovelessness that plagues our lives and our hearts. We forget that without God's grace, sin is a debt we cannot pay and a trap we cannot avoid.

Don't Sleep Through It

To get a picture of your daily neediness, read Matthew 26:36-46. The scene is the Garden of Gethsemane just before Jesus' arrest and crucifixion. Both Jesus and His disciples were facing their hours of greatest trial. Jesus met the crisis with prayer and stayed faithful to His Father through incredible pressure and pain. The disciples crumbled and fled.

Why? They weren't even aware of their need. Their thoughts were elsewhere. Jesus had told them: *"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is*

willing, but the body is weak" (Matthew 26:41, NIV). Instead they slept. Instead of meeting their weakness with prayer and dependence on God, they simply gave in. They failed to trust God, so they failed.

When we fail to trust God, we fail. Like the disciples, our hour of need is upon us, but we are preoccupied with other things. We are dull and lethargic. Like them, we need to watch and pray so that we will not fall into temptation. Our intentions are good, but we are weak. We must realize our constant need, then turn to God with that need. The Lord's Prayer helps us do that, day by day.

Why Lead Us Not?

But why do we pray, *lead us not into temptation*? Does the question imply that God might lead us into sin unless we ask Him not to?

The basic petition is, *deliver us from the evil one*. For emphasis it is stated in a negative way, *lead us not into temptation*, then in a positive way, *but deliver us from the evil one*. God will not lead us into evil, any more than He will let us starve unless we pray for daily bread.

The purpose of the Lord's Prayer is not to tell God something He needs to hear. The purpose is to align our hearts and desires with Him, to look to Him in our needs, to open ourselves to His working in our lives. We seek His glory, His control, His will. We turn to Him for our daily provisions. We seek His forgiveness and His deliverance from evil.

Summary

Stay aware of the danger of sin. Stay aware of your weakness. When life presses in, watch and pray. When you get spiritually drowsy, watch and pray. Day by day, watch and pray.

And remember: the Lord's Prayer is *us*, not just *me*. Our loved ones also need God's guidance and protection in a world of evil. Lift them up to your Father. Ask Him to build a hedge around them. Ask Him to keep them and lead them to Himself.

Hymn: [Keep Us from All Evil](#)