

Deliver Us from Evil #1

Read Matthew 6:13

*Father,
deliver us from the evil one today.
I ask for myself,
for my family, and
for my brothers and sisters in Christ.
Protect us, Lord.
Help us to watch and pray.*

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.

To get a picture of your daily neediness, read Matthew 26:36-46. In the Garden of Gethsemane, facing His arrest, trial, and crucifixion, Jesus met the crisis with prayer and stayed faithful to His Father. 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.

Hymn: Keep Us from All Evil

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