

Prayer, From the Westminster Larger Catechism, part 9

Q195: What do we pray for in the sixth petition?

A195: In the sixth petition (which is, And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil), acknowledging, that the most wise, righteous, and gracious God, for divers holy and just ends, may so order things, that we may be assaulted, foiled, and for a time led captive by temptations; that Satan, the world, and the flesh, are ready powerfully to draw us aside, and ensnare us; and that we, even after the pardon of our sins, by reason of our corruption, weakness, and want of watchfulness, are not only subject to be tempted, and forward to expose ourselves unto temptations, but also of ourselves unable and unwilling to resist them, to recover out of them, and to improve them; and worthy to be left under the power of them: we pray, that God would so overrule the world and all in it, subdue the flesh, and restrain Satan, order all things, bestow and bless all means of grace, and quicken us to watchfulness in the use of them, that we and all his people may by his providence be kept from being tempted to sin; or, if tempted, that by his Spirit we may be powerfully supported and enabled to stand in the hour of temptation: or when fallen, raised again and recovered out of it, and have a sanctified use and improvement thereof: that our sanctification and salvation may be perfected, Satan trodden under our feet, and we fully freed from sin, temptation, and all evil, forever.

Born again Christians are not exempt from temptation by Satan, the world and our flesh. Nor are we exempt from giving in to them, and being controlled by them for a time. But thanks be to God, he will not leave us broken and alone! By his grace alone, he will rescue us from our weakness, he will forgive our transgression, he will completely defeat the evil one, and bring us back to himself. If we are his, no one or nothing can pluck us from his hand.

Merciful Father, you teach me countless ways how I must rely on you entirely, and not my own strength and understanding. You are my only hope, my high tower, my hiding place, my shield. Only you can and will protect me from evil. I pray that you will keep me faithful to you, even in the trial of temptation. I pray that I will not dishonor you by falling into my old ways and habits. I pray that you will let me stand against all evil and resist my flesh and the devil, when I am tempted to do what I know is wrong.

But when I do fall, I pray that your Spirit will convict me at once, that my heart will break because of the evil I have committed against you, and that you will forgive me again, as you always have. Praise and glory to the true God, who loves his children and forgives their sins! I pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior. Amen!