

GOD'S PROTECTION

Week 4 – 3/31/2019
Small Group Questions

In preparation for this week's study, read Matthew 4:1-11.

"Culture has been drastically shaped by the Star Wars phenomena. No one could have guessed the huge impact it would make. But the struggle between good and evil, light and darkness, is classic. The Star Wars films picture the philosophy of dualism at its finest. Whether they consider themselves dualists or not, most of the world's people live in doubt about life's outcome. Will evil or good prevail? Will darkness or light prove stronger in the end? In dualistic thought, the two forces are locked in perpetual battle. Dualists believe the battle will last forever, and neither side will ever or can ever defeat the other." – Jane Fryar

Which of the following temptations are you most likely to fall prey to and why?

- Reaching for an extra piece of cake or pie
- Spending extra on an impulse buy at the store
- Sharing an extra juicy bit of gossip with a friend
- Skipping out on work to do something fun

DIG INTO THE WORD

1. Read Matthew 4:1-11. Three times Jesus comes face-to-face with the devil and temptation. In each of the temptations Jesus faced, what might have been appealing? It's interesting that Jesus doesn't confront temptation relying on his own authority. How does Jesus overcome Satan's temptation each time? What can we learn from the way He handles temptation? How often do you use the Word of God to battle temptation?
2. Read James 1:13-14. Author David Timms in his book, *Living the Lord's Prayer*, makes the following observation: "Our mortal enemy is not the one who forces us against our will, but the one who destroys us by appealing to our will." How does this compare to what James says about temptation? What does he say is the cause of temptation? What desires lurk within each of us that need the Lord's help to combat?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 10:6-13. What promise does God provide when we are tempted? How does this promise give us a better understanding of why we pray this petition?
4. Read Hebrews 2:17-18 and 4:15-16. What hope do these passages this give you as you face temptations in your life?
5. Read Ephesians 6:10-12. Here Paul talks about the nature of spiritual warfare and how we are up against "the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." How does this passage put these petitions in a different light? If we were commanders charged with preparing Christian soldiers for battle against Satan, which of his tactics to lure us into sin would we warn them about?

PRAY FROM THE HEART

"We dare not underestimate the power of darkness. Peter did that and ended up denying Christ. Judas toyed with the darkness, and it stole his soul. On the other hand, we dare not despair. The church is on the march, not under siege. Hell does not advance on us. No, Satan and his demons are the ones

fighting a holding action. God has, by our Savior's victory on Calvary, pushed the darkness back; as we continue to unite in prayer against it, we keep on pushing it back." – Jane Fryar

Before your usual group prayer time this week, as a group, create a breath prayer – a prayer that you can say in one breath – to help you remember to ask for God's help when facing temptation.

- First, think of a special name for God that you like to use: i.e., God, Jesus, Christ, Lord, Savior, Creator, Father.
- Next, choose a few words to form a brief sentence asking God to help you when you are tempted. It may be something like, "Help me choose what is right."
- Finally, combine the name for God with your brief sentence. Try placing the name for God at the beginning and at the end of the sentence to see which fits best.

Write out your breath prayer and begin to use it, especially when you feel weak.

Week 1	March 10
Week 2	March 17
Week 3	March 24
Week 4	March 31
Week 5	April 7