

The Lord's Prayer III  
Matthew 6:13

**Introduction**

The Lord's Prayer begins with a reverential address and a solemn call unto the Lord. We are taught to approach God with reverence, but also reminded of the freeness that is given to us to approach God in Christ. It then continues with a patient pleading in faith. This faith is a faith that is exercised daily, as one learns to trust in the Lord for our daily provision. This pleading with the Lord is one of experience, for a child of God has experienced the forgiveness of God. Having experienced God's forgiveness we too must exercise the same forgiveness towards others, reflecting the right attitude of the heart.

As the Lord's Prayer comes to its conclusion, one last plea is brought unto the Lord. This is a plea for grace to resist temptation and deliverance from evil. The Lord's Prayer then concludes with a confident and glorious hope while ascribing glory to the Lord.

The conclusion of the Lord's Prayer exhorts us to have the right focus in prayer. As a Christian comes before the Lord with his burdens and cares in faith, he too needs to arise from his knees in hope. The tone with which we should conclude our prayer should be one of confidence and trust in who God is – we take our sight away from ourselves and look unto God again.

This does not deny the struggles that Christians face and go through in life. Yet, these struggles, even against temptations, are brought before the Lord in prayer.

**1. Divine Enabling in Prayer (v.13a)**

*“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:...”*

In this petition, we have to consider two things: first is the request to *“lead us not into temptation”* and second is to *“deliver us from evil.”* The first request is a request expressed negatively for something to not happen, and the second request is expressed positively for something to happen.

a) *“Lead us not into temptation”*

The first part of this petition is a request that God will not lead us into temptation. We need to first consider what “temptation” means. This word is used in mainly two ways in the Bible. It may be used to describe a “test” or a “trial” (James 1:2) or it may also be used to describe an “enticement to sin” (James 1:13).<sup>1</sup> These two thoughts are closely related. While a test or a trial, such as affliction of the body or persecution, may not be in itself evil, a person may react and respond to these trials in a sinful way. It may also be said that even an enticement to sin is also a test or a trial - it is a test of a believer's steadfastness and faith in the Lord.

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<sup>1</sup> BDAG, *peirasmo*/β

Broadly speaking, temptations arise from various internal and external sources. The internal sources would include our own lust (James 1:14) or the flesh (Rom 7:18). External sources would include the Devil who is called, “the tempter” (Matt 4:3) or “the world” (1 John 2:15, 16).

The next thing we need to carefully consider is the phrase “lead us not.” This verb literally means to “bring into” or “carry into.” This word means to bring into the sphere of or to bring into a certain condition of something. In this present context, to be “led into” temptation then is not just to be brought into the presence of temptation, but also into the control, power and effects of temptation that would effect sin. This prayer then acknowledges the providential and sovereign hand of God even in the midst of dealing with temptation. It is a prayer that God will grant us grace that we will not be totally consumed or conquered by temptation which will lead to sin.

When we consider these things together, there are several things we can conclude. We can first conclude what this request does not mean.

First of all, this request does not imply that God can lead a person into a temptation to sin. James declares very clearly in James 1:13, *“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:”* Here it means that God does not tempt any one unto sin with evil. Hence this request does not imply that God actively leads and brings a person into the power of temptation, or that God entices a person to sin.

Secondly, this request also does not mean that God will not permit a Christian to be tested or tried. In Job 23:10 Job acknowledged that the trying of faith is for the purpose of purifying to be as gold – “But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”

Thirdly, it also does not mean that God will not **allow** or **permit** a Christian to be tempted to sin. The Lord Jesus Christ permitted Himself to be tempted of the Devil to fulfil God’s purpose (Matt 4:1). This does not mean a Christian should knowingly run into a place of temptation for the Bible tells us to flee from it (2 Tim 2:22). Rather this does show that God in His sovereign will may permit temptation to come upon His own.

We must now also understand what this petition means. This petition is a prayer which acknowledges the need of God’s grace to the living of holy lives. It is a prayer which shows that we recognise that we cannot resist devil and his temptation without the power and the grace of God. It is also a prayer that God will grant us his grace that we will not succumb to the power of temptation, and that we will not be enticed to the point of sin. In short, it is a prayer that God will help us to not fall into sin.

Practically this is 1) An acknowledgement of our hatred for sin and a desire of holiness; 2) A recognising of our own weakness and our inability to resist temptation without the grace of God; 3) A remembering of God’s promise of deliverance in the midst of temptation (1 Cor 10:13).

b) “But deliver us from evil”

The second part of this petition is stated positively where there is a request for divine deliverance from evil.

The word “deliver” means to “rescue” or to “save” a person from danger. This verb is used in relation to temptation in 2Pet. 2:7-9 – “*And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:*” Over here, this deliverance is illustrated in the deliverance which Lot experienced. Lot had yielded to the snare of Sodom but was rescued out of that sinful snare before it consumed him totally.

“Evil” here has the definite article in Greek. It thus may also be expressed as “the evil.” This evil then can be both a reference to the Devil and his works, as well as to wickedness. This word “evil” in reference to the evil one is a request to be delivered from all the schemes and methods of Satan. This would include his wiles (Eph 6:11) and his fiery darts (Eph 6:16). What we wrestle against then is not merely man’s influence or man’s doings, but we are wrestling against spiritual wickedness in high places (Eph 6:12). To be delivered from evil is also a request to be delivered from wickedness in whatever ways it may be manifested. It is to be delivered from “evil men” (2 Tim 3:13), “evil work” (2 Tim 4:18) or “evil days” (Eph 5:16).

We need to realise that we are unable to outwit the Devil and his schemes. It is also not by pure resolve and will power that sin is overcome. It is in prayer that grace and divine enabling is granted to overcome temptations.

## **2. Confidence and Hope in Prayer (v.13b)**

*“...For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”*

The word “for” ties this conclusion back to the whole prayer. It tells us that we utter those petitions and we make those requests because we know who is the God whom we cry unto. The Lord’s Prayer concludes with a looking back to God. When a Christian prays, he must be reminded again that he is praying to God. A Christian may feel that he is merely listing out or merely describing his problems in prayer. But that is not what prayer is. The Lord Jesus Christ in concluding this prayer teaches us that we must turn our sight again unto God when we conclude our prayer. Prayer is to be concluded in hope and confidence in who God is. We need to remember who we have carried our prayer unto.

a) Confidence in God’s Control

The Lord’s Prayer opened with a request for God’s kingdom to come. That is a request for God to unfold His own will as the sovereign God. The Lord’s Prayer concludes with a similar theme but with a tone of confidence and hope. There is an acknowledgment that to God belongs the kingdom. This is an acknowledgement that God sits enthroned above and that He rules as king.

One recalls the praise which Nebuchadnezzar rendered unto God after his salvation experience. He acknowledged that God alone is the sovereign king whose kingdom is without end. Daniel 4:34 – *“And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation.”*

Such must be our confidence in prayer – to know that God is in control and that He is still on the throne. This would also mean that we place our trust in the Lord’s own timing, and in the way God works and unfold His will. We have a misunderstanding of prayer when having brought our petition before the Lord, we still murmur and complain, or still carry our burdens in such a way as to suggest that we don’t believe that there is a God.

While this speaks of confidence in God’s control, it also reflects an attitude of surrender and submission. At times when we pray, we still want our will to be done, or we want to build our own kingdom. But when we acknowledge that God is sovereign and rules over all, we are surrendering control to the Lord.

#### b) Confidence in God’s power

There is next, an acknowledgement of God’s power. God has power to accomplish what He wills. When we pray according to God’s will, God has power to accomplish what we have requested of the Lord. We doubt the power of prayer when we doubt God’s power. There is an entrusting of all our undertakings unto God’s powerful hands.

#### c) Confidence to God’s glory

When we acknowledge that to God belongs the glory, it reflects our ultimate desire in prayer – that God’s name be glorified. This is ultimately the focus in all our prayer. It is not for selfish gain or benefit, but it is to God’s glory. This must be our attitude in prayer. When we pray for the provision of our daily bread, it is unto God’s glory – our living must be to God’s glory. When we pray for the forgiveness of our debts as we forgive the debts of others, it is to the Lord’s glory – forgiving one another brings glory to God. When we pray for grace to resist temptation and sin, it is to the Lord’s glory – a life of holiness brings glory to God. Our prayer must be cantered upon God’s glory. God’s glory must direct our prayer, and what we desire in all our prayer should be to God’s glory.

#### d) Unchanging confidence

The Lord’s Prayer in conclusion ascribes the kingdom, power and glory to God, but it also adds that it is “for ever” that these things belong unto God.

It may seem to be rather insignificant, but these words “for ever” acknowledge the unchanging and eternal nature of God. Thus our confidence rests on a firm and steadfast foundation. God’s character, nature and person will never change. He will ever remain sovereign. God’s power will never change; God’s promises will never

change; God's purposes will never change. Because God is the unchanging and eternal God, our confidence is always steadfast and sure.

### **Conclusion**

The last word in prayer is "Amen." This word "Amen" means "it is true." When we say "Amen" we are saying "truly" or "let it be so." It is a word of strong affirmation of what was stated. In prayer, it expresses the idea of "the Lord do so." This word is an expression of our sincerity and agreement in prayer. We are expressing that the words uttered in prayer comes from our heart. When we say "Amen" to another person's prayer, we are also saying that what the other person has uttered expresses the thoughts of your heart and you agree with what was uttered.

"Amen" is also an expression of faith. When we say, "let it be so" we are acknowledging that God is God and by faith we entrust it to the Lord to undertake all that we have requested of the Lord.

When we pray, we begin with a sight of God and we conclude with our sight fixed upon God again. The person of God, His power, glory, and promises must surround all our petitions and request. When we end our prayer, it must be in quiet confidence that we have uttered our prayers to God who hears.

### Discussion Questions

1. Where do temptations come from? What are some of the sources of temptations? How does prayer help in the overcoming of temptations?
2. What do you find is the hardest thing to surrender when you pray?
3. What has been your confidence in prayer? Do you believe that there is power in prayer? Where have you been drawing your confidence for your prayer from?
4. What is your motivation for praying? Simply put, why do you pray? What is prayer to you?
5. Share two thing that you have learn regarding the Lord's Prayer that has impacted you. Is there anything that you have to change regarding your prayer (e.g. attitude, priority)?