

The Model Prayer – Lead Us Not into Temptation

Spilman Memorial Baptist Church, Kinston NC

Dr. H. Powell Dew, Jr.

July 18, 2021

Text: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-8

Purpose: In the last petition of the Model Prayer, we learn that Jesus is concerned with our future ability to escape the snare of sin by overcoming temptation. All have had to face temptation. The good news is there is a way of escape if we hold fast to our convictions and turn to Christ in our time of need.

A daddy teased his little daughter by suggesting she liked a certain boy in her kindergarten class.

The little girl was quite indignant. "No, daddy, I don't like him!" she stated. "He's only interested in one thing."

Shocked, the daddy cautiously asked what that one thing might be.

"Paw Patrol, of course," said the girl.¹



We come today to a passage of scripture that has plagued mankind since the Garden of Eden. Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "*Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*" It all started that infamous day when Adam

¹ Mikey's Funnies, A Crush Funny, June 11, 2021

and Eve listened to the voice of serpent and ignored the warning of God.

In Genesis we see God has placed abundant food in the garden for Adam and Eve to eat. We often refer to the Garden of Eden as paradise.



A place where life was as perfect as it could be. There was only one restriction placed upon the first couple – they were not to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The Lord said to them, “*The day you eat of this tree you shall surely die.*”

We don’t know how long Adam and Eve walked around that tree looking at the fruit. It could have been days or it could have been years. Some have speculated as to what kind of fruit it was. Some paintings portray it as an apple. Others have said it could be like a pomegranate. I believe it was a fruit that none of us have ever seen.

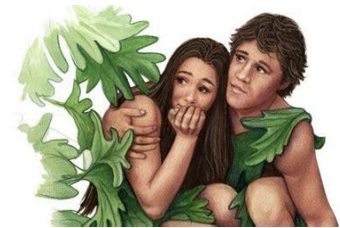


Along came the great seducer, the serpent, which is Satan, who looked Eve in the eye and began to engage her in a conversation about the trees of the garden.

Eve said they were allowed to eat of all the trees except one. Eve misquoted God when she said, “*You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.*” Eve took what was instructed by God and added to it. She added the part about not touching it. Aren’t we guilty of taking the clear word of God on a topic and adding our rules and regulations to it? But God’s instructions don’t need any of our additions. When we add to it, we only get in trouble.

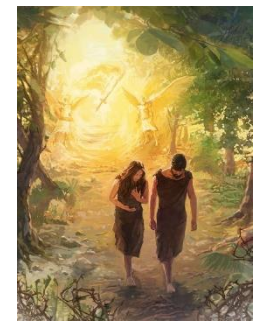
And boy did Adam and Eve get in trouble. Eve looked longingly at the fruit. Saw that it looked good, probably smelled good, and it looked like it would taste great. She understood if she ate of it then it would make her wise. And who doesn’t want to be wise? She could not resist the temptation any longer. She reached out and took it, and ate it. She turned to Adam who was standing right there with her and he ate from it as well. I guess Adam was watching to see if Eve died before he tasted it! I find it very interesting that Adam said nothing during all of this exchange with the serpent.

When Adam and Eve ate of the tree, it opened their eyes, and they felt shame for their nakedness for the first time and felt compelled to clothe themselves with fig leaves.



When God confronted Adam and Eve about what they had done, Adam blamed God for giving Eve to him. After all, it was the woman that gave the fruit to Adam. Eve in turn blamed the serpent. And the blame game began. Don’t we still play that blame game?

As a result of their decision, mankind inherited that sin nature of Adam. Mankind also inherited the promise of death. Except for those alive today, every person since Adam has died. No one lives forever. Both the man and woman were put outside of the Garden of Eden and were not allowed back in.



Creation was changed because sin entered into the hearts of

man. The ground was cursed with weeds; the man would have to work diligently to earn their daily bread, the woman's pain would be multiplied in childbirth.

It all fell apart there in the Garden of Eden.

Over the past few months, we have been looking at the Model Prayer as found in Matthew. We have seen how the first three petitions help focus our attention upward towards God. God is our Father. Holiness is a perfect description of God. God desired to create a perfect place for His people to live but we choose to live in sin instead of fellowship with God.

I believe if you or I were placed there in the Garden of Eden, we too would have yielded to the temptation. We are so hard on Adam and Eve, but we yield to temptations as well.

God knows we need food to eat that is why he placed Adam and Eve in a Garden they didn't plant to eat food they didn't work to produce. That is why Jesus said, *"Give us this day our daily bread."* All of our food comes from God. Apart from His blessing we would have nothing.



God knows we sin and we need to come back to Him with a repentant heart. When we come to Him, He freely forgives and our fellowship is restored. Simply sewing fig leaves to cover our sin will not make us right with God. Simply doing good works will not restore the broken relationship with God. It required the shedding of blood, even there in

the Garden of Eden. God knew Adam and Eve were naked and needed to be clothed. God Himself made tunics of animal skins to clothe them. It required the shedding of blood for their sin to be covered. It required God's action not mans.

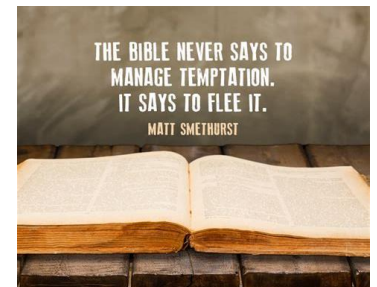
That is why Jesus instructed the disciples to pray, *"Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."* Just as we need forgiveness, so do our neighbors who do wrong unto us.



Jesus understood the root of our broken relationship with God began first as a temptation. Being tempted is not a sin. But meditating on that temptation, staring at it longingly, reaching out to touch and taste that temptation that is when sin enters in.

This is something that we need to take seriously and flee from because temptation comes wrapped in beautiful packages but brings death and destruction.

- When temptation came to Joseph by way of Potiphar's wife, Joseph fled. By fleeing he saved his life and later saved the family of Jacob.
- When temptation came to Samson by way of Delilah, Samson succumbed to her tempting ways and in the end, his strength was taken and he died an awful death.



- When temptation came Lot's way, he set his tent facing the city of Sodom and Gomorrah. Over time he moved his tent closer and closer and lost everything when God's judgment came.

I read a more modern story of temptation this week.

A young man was engaged to a woman that had a younger, 22-year-old sister that was quite a looker. This younger sister would make flattering comments and show off some of her body with lower cut blouses and skirts. She would deliberately try to tempt this young man when no one was looking.

One day this little sister called her future brother-in-law over to go over the wedding invitations she had ordered. When he got there, she was alone. While there the little sister confessed, she had feelings for him and could no longer control it. She said if he wanted to have one more fling before he married her sister, she would be upstairs waiting for him.

The young man was in complete shock. He could not say a word. He stood there for a moment and suddenly turned for the front door to go to his car.

When he opened the door, there stood his fiancé, her mother and father, and the rest of her family. They cheered excitedly. With tears in his eyes, the father-in-law said, "We're so happy you passed our little test. We couldn't ask for a better man for our daughter. Welcome to the family!"²

² <http://fundupage.blogspot.com/2010/07/temptation.html> (accessed 7/8/2021)

This young man must have heard the Biblical admonition found in 2 Timothy 2:22, "*Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*" 2 Corinthians 6:18 says, "*Flee sexual immorality.*"



Temptations come wrapped in pretty packages. That is why we need to stay diligent and pray, "*Lead us not into temptation.*" For you see in the Garden of Eden it was not God that tempted Adam and Eve, it was Satan. It is Satan's goal to derail as many people as possible from listening to God. He is the father of lies and seeks to kill, steal, and destroy. Yielding to the temptations around us kills relationships, steals our joy of walking with the Lord, and often causes destruction of the most precious things in life.

There is an old story of a man who once lived the life as a hard-core alcoholic. He was able to break that awful habit and reformed his life. However, every time he rode into town, he continued to hitch his horse to the post in front of the town saloon. Eventually the man fell back into the old way of life. If he had a healthy fear of temptation, he would have never put himself in a position of yielding again.



I don't know what sin so easily besets you: sexual sin, gossip, pride, lying,



stealing, or coveting. Once we yield to temptation, it becomes like a crease in a piece of paper. Once creased it is so much easier to fold it in the same place again. And Satan knows how to put those temptations you are most prone to right in front of you!

Temptations most often come first as a thought. In the secret places of our mind, we dramatize and act out the thoughts. We read books about wickedness; we play video games that help reinforce the atrocities of war and murder. Some would say it is harmless fun. But these reinforce our sinful bent and sometimes people move outside the book or video game and embrace promiscuity or take the violence they have vicariously experienced into their schools and into the streets.

We enjoy the thrill of being in a harmful situation and succeeding. As young people, and some older ones as well, we tend to keep the wrong company that leads to paths of destruction. Many a young person has ended up in jail, and their life ruined, because they were with the wrong person at the wrong time.

We may hesitate to lend someone a dime of our money, but how quickly do we put our very soul in danger by the temptations we continue to entertain. When it comes to temptations, we are reckless and foolish.

Jesus tells us to fear temptation. The areas in which we have a tendency to be strongest can become our greatest weakness because we are over confident in our strengths which often lead to our



downfall. We need to be afraid of our weakness and our strengths and take steps to guard ourselves against temptation.

Many people have yielded to the temptation of pornography, especially on a computer. There are dozens of software programs out there that help keep someone away from those sites.

Not all temptations that come our way are sexual in nature.

- A person who has lost a loved one through tragic circumstances may be tempted to be bitter and harsh.
- Maybe one who is facing a difficult physical condition may be tempted to yield to self-pity.
- Maybe you have been in a situation where you feel as if you were treated unfairly or unjustly. There is a temptation to become hateful, spiteful, or resentful towards the other person.
- It could be you are tempted to get caught up in vanity and self-love.
- Maybe you have been successful in life and seek to wield that power selfishly.

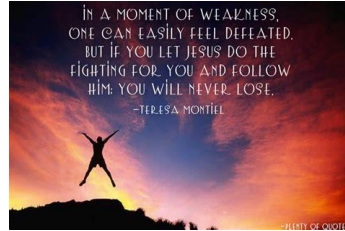
→ When Napoleon was a young school boy, he wrote an essay about the dangers of ambition. Yet it was his own ambition that ruined his life.

→ Moses was noted as being the humblest person that ever lived. (Numbers 12:3) But in a moment of weakness and anger, Moses struck a rock and lost his chance to enter into the Promised Land.

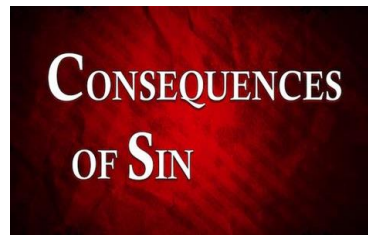


→ Simon Peter was known for his impulsive courage. But on the night of Jesus' betrayal, Peter denied even knowing Jesus three times.

A person is no stronger than their weakest moment, and every person has an Achilles heel, a point of vulnerability. Every person can yield, but we need to realize God gives us a way of escape if we pay attention and are attentive to the consequences for yielding.



God has given us a free will. He did not make us puppets to dance at His bidding. We can choose to live our lives in accordance to His teaching or we can selfishly go our own way. Life would be so much simpler if we did not have to make decisions. I believe we need to put safeguards in our life to make sure we don't go astray and experience the consequences of our disobedience. I am sure Adam and Eve, if they knew the totality of the consequences for their disobedience, would wish they could go back and undo what was done.



We cannot undo the consequences for our sin either.

Jesus sees our sin as so serious that he said, *“And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you.”* *“If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you.”* (Matthew 5:29, 30) I don't think Jesus was suggesting we start a church of handless and eyeless members. I do think he was trying to emphasize how

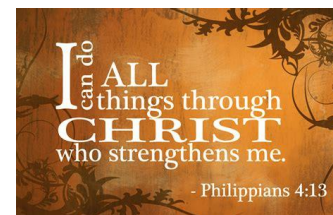
important it was not to sin and not to yield to those temptations that come. It is better to lose a hand or eye than to lose your soul for eternity.

We should use our hands to do productive good work. We should use our eyes to see our neighbor in need and reach out to help and not harm.

There is scripture that helps us see that God is with us, walking with us in those moments.

“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.” (Jude 24) Christ is available to help us if we turn to Him in our time of need. We are made for a victorious life, not to be overcome by it.

Satan wants you to think you have to yield to sin. On the Ed Sullivan show one time, the comedian Flip Wilson said, *“The devil made me do it.”* That became the excuse for millions of people. Shifting the blame once again.



We do not have to live defeated lives. We can live victoriously. The scripture says, *“I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.”* (Philippians 4:13) Christ is in those that have claimed Him as Savior and is strengthening us to resist temptation.

There is a story told of the little engine that could. It had to climb a huge mountain one day and as it worked going up that hill, he said to himself, *“I think I can – I think I can.”*

Nothing is accomplished by someone that says, “I think I can’t – I think I can’t.”

We need to realize we can overcome our sin because we have someone in us that tells us “*I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.*”

If you study the lives of those we call saints, you will find that they gained their spiritual power in this very point. They may have sinned, but they never surrendered to sin. They never accepted failure as final. They never ceased to look forward with confidence. They said, “I can in Christ”

This same power is available to all who call upon the name of the Lord. You can be victorious over the sins that so easily beset you if you yield your life back to God. You no longer need to live in despair and defeat.

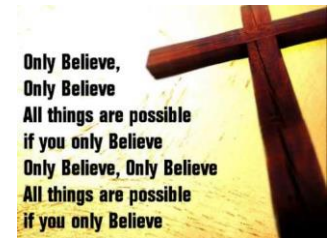
Jesus Christ has paid the penalty for our sin with His blood. When we receive Christ as our Savior, His spirit comes and lives within us. The Apostle John reminds us, “*You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*” (I John 4:4)

There is a little song in our hymnal called, “Only Believe.”³ (Hymn 534) The words to the chorus go like this:

Only believe, only believe;
All things are possible, only believe;
Only believe, only believe;
All things are possible, only believe.

This song was written by Paul Rader in 1921. He and his daughter were crossing a busy street in Chicago and she was tightly holding on to his hand. He asked if she was afraid to cross the street and she said, “No, not when you’re with me. Why should I be afraid?”

When he went home, he composed this hymn. The verses are not in our hymnal but they convey a tremendous message.



Fear not little flock, from the cross to the throne,
From death into life He went for His own;
All power in earth, all power above,
Is given to Him for the flock of His love.

Fear not, little flock, He goeth ahead,
Your shepherd selected the path you must tread;
The waters of Marah He’ll sweeten for thee –
He drank all the bitter in Gethsemane.

Fear not little flock, whatever your lot;
He enters all rooms, “the doors being shut.”
He never forsakes, He never is gone –
So count on His presence in darkness and dawn.

Chorus: Only believe, only believe;
All things are possible, only believe;
Only believe, only believe;
All things are possible, only believe.

³ Handbook to the Baptist Hymnal (1991 version)– Only Believe, page 215, Hymn 534

God has confidence in us. As we abide in Him and He abides in us, we can confidently conclude our prayer:



“For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.”

How long will God’s kingdom last? Forever!
How long will God’s power last? Forever!
How long will the Glory of God last? Forever!

How long will we abide with the Lord? Forever and ever
Amen!

LET US PRAY

Fremont Missionary Baptist Church, Fremont NC

October 2, 2011

Spilman Memorial Baptist Church, Kinston NC

July 18, 2021

Temptation

I was a very happy man. My wonderful girlfriend and I had been dating for over a year, and so we decided to get married. There was only one little thing bothering me...her beautiful younger sister.

My prospective sister-in-law was twenty-two, wore very tight mini skirts, and generally went bra-less. She would regularly bend down when she was near me, and I always got more than merely a nice view. It had to be deliberate, because she never did it when she was near anyone else.

One day this 'little' sister called and asked me to come over to check the wedding invitations. She was alone when I arrived, and she whispered to me that she had feelings and desires for me that she couldn't overcome. She told me that she wanted me just once before I got married and committed my life to her sister.

Well, I was in complete shock and couldn't say a word.

She said, 'I'm going upstairs to my bedroom, and if you want one last wild fling, just come up and get me.'

Stunned, I watched her go up the stairs. I stood there for a moment, then turned and made a beeline for the front door. I opened it and headed straight towards my car.

Good lord! My entire future family was standing outside, all clapping! With tears in his eyes, my father-in-law embraced me and said, 'We're so happy that you passed our little test - we couldn't ask for a better man for our daughter. Welcome to the family!'

<http://fundupage.blogspot.com/2010/07/temptation.html>

