

Week Beginning: 8th September 2019

Worship Series: #5 in series



lifegroups
live life abundantly

living sharing growing

Theme Verse

Our Father...Lead us not into temptation...

Matthew 6:13a

Remember This Week

Satan constantly inserts question marks where God has put a full stop. When doubts arise and questions abound, remember who you are – a beloved child of God. For that final word is the grip of grace that holds you securely and will never let you go.



**I will instruct you and teach you
in the way you should go;**

I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.

**Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding
but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you.**

**Many are the woes of the wicked, but the Lord's unfailing love
surrounds the one who trusts in him.**

Rejoice in the Lord and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart!.

Psalms 32:8-11

Gracious and merciful Father, with every step we take in life we are confronted with choices between belief and unbelief, obedience and disobedience. Give us courage to face and name our own temptations, and to direct our lives toward you that we may walk in spirit and truth as the Holy Spirit leads, guides, fills and empowers us. Strengthen us in this time together for our journey ahead that we may resist temptation in the power of your Spirit. We ask this in the name of Jesus, Amen.

1. *Share your highs and lows since you last met with one another.*
2. *Share how you went with your living purposefully from last time?*
3. *In what ways have you been aware of the Heavenly Father's leading or guiding in the past week?*
4. *How often do you pray against temptation in your life? Why do you think that is?*
5. *When are the times of your life that you are most vulnerable to temptation?*

Like a stalker, it harasses you and your identity with unwanted and obsessive attention. It never leaves you alone, following you wherever you go - at home, in the schoolyard, at your workplace, in shops, restaurants, even your car. It knows your history, your routines and where you are most vulnerable. It's called Temptation. And the mastermind behind this strategy is Satan. Every step you take there is an orchestrated and calculated attempt to deceive you and shift your allegiance, trust, and confidence away from God and toward some substitute that promises a more secure identity. The only way through is to pray for the Father's Guidance, and that's what Jesus invites us to do today.

Read Luke 4:1-13

6. *What words/phrases/observations stand out for you in this text?*
7. *What is the significance of the Spirit leading Jesus **into** the wilderness where he is tested?*
8. *Read Luke 3:21-22. How does this declaration make all the difference to how Jesus approaches and overcomes Satan's temptation each time?*
9. *How is that different from the way that you deal with temptation in your own life at this present time?*
10. *It has been said the three greatest temptations for all humanity are power, fame, and success. Do you agree or disagree? Which of the three do you most find yourself struggling with?*

With every temptation Jesus faced, Satan attempted to steal his identity, question his authority and diffuse the power he has as the son of the Father. Jesus gets that. But with each Word that Jesus uses he recalls something so powerful that not even Satan, with all his knowledge, can refute — his identity in the Father's eyes. That's why this prayer "Lead us not into temptation" is such an important prayer to pray. In Luther's Explanation of the Sixth Petition, he explains that we are praying that





"God would guard and keep us so that the devil, the world, and our sinful nature may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, or other great shame and vice. Although we are attacked by these things, we pray that we may finally overcome them and win the victory." You have God's approval. To be the beloved of the Father is to know God has an indestructible claim on you, an eternal intention for you and an unyielding embrace of you.

13. *David Timms in his book, Living the Lord's Prayer, says: "Our mortal enemy is not the one who forces us against our will, but the one who destroys us by appealing to our will." Read James 1:13–14. How does this compare to what James says about temptation?*
14. *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?*
15. *Read Hebrews 2:17–18 and 4:15–16. What hope do these passages give you as you face temptations in your life?*

The word used for testing and temptation is the same but they have very different purposes and outcomes.

Temptation

Source: Satan
Purpose: To lead us into sin, separate us from God, question our identity, bring shame.
Outcome: Destruction, guilt, brokenness

Testing

God
To be a 'proving ground' of obedience, love, devotion
Maturity, increased faith

Read Deuteronomy 8:1-6. For most of God's people God's guidance is the length of one act of obedience...simply do the thing right in front of us. When the Psalmists says in Psalm 119:105 "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path", he is not referring to a LED set of highbeams that light up the road 300 metres in front of you, but a flickering oil lamp that lights up the next step and then the next one and then the next one. That's why we need to pray this prayer regularly and before we get into the moment where temptation launches it's assault on us. So pray "Lead us not into temptation..." trusting that as he has promised, the Father will guide you to what is best...advise...watch over...steer you through the worst the tempter throws your way...and bring you to himself just as he has held you close to his heart and will lead you into life and through every temptation trial and trouble here.

Luther says in the Large Catechism:

"For none of us can avoid being tempted or enticed, as long as we live with our sinful nature and with the devil roaming around. That won't change. We have to put up with temptations, and even get caught up in them. But we pray here that we won't fall in and get drowned in them....that is why we Christians have to be armed and expect every day to face constant attacks. This will mean we won't go around all sure of ourselves and off our guard, as though the devil was far away. Instead we will be ready for him when he strikes, and fight him off."

Luther's Large Catechism - Sixth Petition, 158-159

Jesus says in Mark 14:38: "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Every step of life is a battle where Satan will try to undermine your confidence in the identity that you have in Jesus. The moment he convinces you to insert that question mark into your lives, your security will disappear and your strength will evaporate?

16. *Where has Satan inserted a question mark in your life where God has put the full stop of his promise?*
17. *What is one concrete step you can take in these next two weeks to live more purposefully in the identity that the Father has declared to you and be more vigilant in the area of temptation?*

Don't forget the orange dots that you can find in the foyer at Church. Many people use these dots by placing them on areas of vulnerability (computer screens/tablets/phones, wallets/credit cards, pantry). Use them to remind you to pray so that you do not fall into temptation.

- * Praise God for leading and guiding you through all of life and especially temptation. Thank Jesus for overcoming all temptation by resting in and trusting the Father's promises that we may also have a way out of temptation. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you store up God's Word within your heart and trust in the identity that the Father has declared you have at your baptism.
- * Pray that God would lead and guide us as a Church to walk in his righteous paths as we enter the next season of mission and ministry.
- * Pray for each other and the areas of your life where you are vulnerable to temptation.
- * Pray for our musicians as they head into the studio to record their first album that Christ may be glorified through what is produced.

Turn to the person next to you and make the sign of the cross on the palm of their hand or forehead as you say:

Name, the Lord will guide you always. Amen.

