

But when you pray . . .

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DAY 10—DO NOT LEAD US INTO TEMPTATION

“God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone” (James 1:13, NKJV).

Does God Really Do That?

God is Holy, He is love. He tempts no one, we tempt ourselves (James 1:14, 15). So then, have you ever wondered what Jesus meant when He said in the Lord’s Prayer, “Do not lead us into temptation”? Jesus was not implying that God tempts us into sin and we must beg Him not to push us there.

So, what does it mean? As in most, if not all, languages, words can have more than one meaning in Greek. So you must look at the original word and its context. The Greek word for “lead” is *eisphero*. This verse can be translated as “do not let us go, do not abandon us there, do not permit us to go.” It doesn’t mean to “entice.”

The Greek word for “temptation” is *peirasmon*. It can be translated as “trial, test, adversity,” etc. So the phrase “do not lead us into temptation” can mean, “Please do not abandon me because alone I will slip into sin, or stay in the sin I have already gotten into” or “If you test me, do not leave me alone or let me stay there for too long for fear of my slipping into sin.”

At times God allows or puts you in specific situations to help you understand your heart and spiritual condition, to open your eyes to see how you are and what you need. The Bible says that you “do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked” (Rev. 3:17, NKJV). When you know you are sick, you go to a doctor, but how can you address something that you don’t know about?

When we see how we are, we realize how sinful we are and know we need Jesus. “Those who live nearest to Jesus discern most clearly the frailty and sinfulness of humanity, and their only hope is in the merit of a crucified and risen Savior” (*The Great Controversy*, p. 471).

God tested King Zedekiah (2 Chron. 32:31). Proverbs 17:3 says that God is testing our hearts. David prayed, “Test me, Lord, and try me” (Ps. 26:2, NIV). Peter says that the fiery trials are sometimes meant to test us (1 Peter 4:12).

“A view of our sinfulness drives us to Him who can pardon; when the soul, realizing its helplessness, reaches out after Christ, He will reveal Himself in power” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 65).

Therefore, “Our great adversary is constantly seeking to keep the troubled soul away from God” (*Prayer*, p. 270). He knows that if we separate from God, we will slip into sin.

In the last part of the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus is trying to underline the secret of power and victory. He says that our single hope is to always be in Jesus and have Jesus in us, to never separate, never depart. “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27, NKJV).

Alone we don’t have the power to change and develop a new heart. But the promise is clear and secure: “[He who is in Christ] is a new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17, NKJV).

So how do you check yourself to see where you are in your spiritual journey? Jesus says we can know by our fruit (Matt. 7:16). How do you produce fruit? By being continually connected with Christ (John 15:1–5) and being filled with His Spirit (Gal. 5:22, 23).

“A profession of religion places men in the church, but the character and conduct show whether they are in continual connection with Christ” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 676). And if you remain continually in Him, you don’t need to understand how He works; you just need to trust Him. He saves all those who come to Him (Heb. 7:25).

“The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 324).

God is calling you to pray without ceasing, to constantly call on the Name of the Lord, to walk with Him, and, in continual awareness of His presence and total dependance on Him, to never separate from Him. That is your only strength. And He promises that if you draw near to God, “He will draw near to you” (James 4:8, NKJV).

Let’s pray together.

Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)

All prayer groups have different ways of praying together. We encourage you to spend the next 30-45 minutes in united prayer, in whatever way the Holy Spirit leads. We encourage short conversational prayers (1-3 sentences). This allows for more people to pray multiple times. Below are some examples of praying through Scripture based on the theme. You may pray through other passages also and include other subjects in your prayer time. See the Leader’s Guide and World Church Prayer Requests for prayer ideas.

Praying God’s Word — James 1:13

“God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.”

“God cannot be tempted by evil”

Father, we thank You for sending Jesus to resist and overcome evil in our place. With You there is no darkness at all, only goodness and light. We know that You have already defeated sin and death and that You are transforming us into Your likeness. Keep our eyes fixed on You!

“Nor does He Himself tempt anyone”

Lord, please keep us far from temptations that could separate us from You. Teach us to flee from the selfish desires that entice us, and turn our eyes to Your spotless character. Help us to hate what you hate and love what you love.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Pray for regional and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God’s voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: Day by Day (#532); Trust and Obey (#590); Draw Me Nearer (#306)

Other Songs: You Are My Hiding Place; Into My Heart; Change My Heart, O God