

“Lead Us Not into Temptation, But Deliver Us from Evil” Matthew 6:13

The Lord’s Prayer is certainly a prayer of healthy and humble self-distrust. Why would we pray “keep us from temptation”? Because we are not very good at keeping ourselves from it! It is always better to boast of our weakness than to flaunt or pretend about our strength (II Cor 12:5-10). This request is definitely a prayer for help. For God’s kind of help – the kind of help that does for us what we cannot do for ourselves: overcome the flesh, the devil, the temptations of a fallen world. When we say, “Save us from ourselves and from the evil one” we are literally confessing “not I, but Christ.” What may be too much for “just me” is never too much for Christ in me!

There is no question that God means the tensions of life – trials, tribulations, temptations (Ja 1:2-4). They are not designed or allowed by God to make us fall or fail – we acknowledge that about His character and His intent every time we say, “Lead us not into... but deliver us from...” This way of praying simply sets our hearts and minds on Him – not the temptation, not the devil. Not even ourselves. He means such things to call us, to “press” us into Himself, our true Help in every moment of need. He does not mean the temptation to lead or bring us into evil, BUT, TO LEAD AND BRING US TO HIMSELF! He is “the way of escape” (I Cor 10:13). He will never lead us into sin or evil but will deliver us from such things. What the devil means for evil – the temptation – God uses for good – the knowledge of His delivering power. God does not lead us “into” the devil’s intent, but drags us away from that trap into the liberty of His indwelling and overcoming life.

Many believers have come to know that God, through His Son, gives us the gift of righteousness. How many of us have come to know He is able to safeguard our righteousness? Only the Righteous One delivers us from the evil one. Only the Redeeming One can take what the devil means to injure and destroy us and work it for healing and edifying purposes. (Gen 50:20; Ro 8:28-29). Just because God is “our Father” does not mean we can live in a trouble-free refuge of revelation and revival. God means the tensions, battles, and temptations – “in this world you will have tribulation”. And He also means that through our faithful trust in Him – “but take courage, I have overcome” – we might be “led in His triumph” (I Jo 4:4; 5:4-5; II Cor 2:14), into the reality of being full-fledged sons and daughters of God. Those who are believing and coming to know that none of the world’s “negatives” can negate Christ and His purposes!



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Greetings

In Madeline L'Engle's book A Wrinkle In Time the plot revolves around a young female character growing into the realization of a sinister spirit at work in her world. Sometimes called the "shadow", the "dark thing", or simply "it", this sinister spirit poses a constant threat of destruction. There is a "Goodness" greater than the "badness", but to overcome one must embrace an "accepted fight", lest "it" overtake you. "It" is always seeking entry, looking for a place to land, seeking a home. "It" wants to assume the responsibility of one's thinking, interpreting, and decision making. The "shadow" wants to express it's dark and sinister will through everything.

The Bible acknowledges the reality of that reality but also leads us to a much greater Reality. The "dark thing" is no match for the "Light of Life". (Jo 1:4,5; 8:12) "It" has been overcome by "Him" (Jo 16:33) The "shadow" must go to the periphery when the Light of the world takes center stage (Jo 12:46)

We are not called to stomp on the darkness, but to walk in the Light. We are not told to focus on the shadows, but to center on the purity of Christ. We are never to hitch our wagons to man-made crusades against the fallen world, rather, we are instructed to hitch our wagons to the inner rule of Christ our Life - for greater is He... in us... than any shadow, any dark thing, any "it" ... out there! Thanks be to God, "Who always leads us in triumph in Christ" and manifests the light of His Life through us in every place!

Calendar


MAY


14 Alachua Study
28 Ocala Study


JUNE


2 First Baptist Church Alachua

Praise & Prayer

 The Victory over the darkness

 The inner reality of Christ the Overcomer

 Eyes to see God's reality

 For those unknowingly darkened in their understanding