

"Therefore, you should pray like this: Our Father in heaven, Your name be honored as holy. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. AND DO NOT BRING US INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM THE EVIL ONE. Matthew 6:9-13

Read the words of Jesus. He calls the believer to ask God to not bring us into temptation. At the surface, this may seem like a strange statement. God is Holy, without sin, so He certainly doesn't entice others to sin! (James 1:13-14). Actually, Jesus shows us our need to be dependent upon the Father so that we will not be led into temptation but will be delivered from evil. Who better than the one who "became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14) to point us to the way to avoid temptation. Look at what the author of Hebrews says about Jesus.

Hebrews 2:14-18 (HCSB)

¹⁴Now since the children have flesh and blood in common, Jesus also shared in these, so that through His death He might destroy the one holding the power of death—that is, the Devil—¹⁵and free those who were held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death. ¹⁶For it is clear that He does not reach out to help angels, but to help Abraham's offspring. ¹⁷Therefore, He had to be like His brothers in every way, so that He could become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸For since He Himself was tested and has suffered, He is able to help those who are tested.

Jesus was tested and suffered and is able to help us who are tested! Jesus never succumbed to temptation. His victory over death and over the evil one who wielded death enabled Jesus to offer His righteousness for our sin. He was able to sacrifice Himself, taking the wrath we deserved while giving us the righteousness He earned!

Pray this with the body...

Praise God for becoming flesh in the Person of Jesus Christ and experiencing everything we have experienced. Thank God for His mercy and faithfulness expressed in Jesus. Speak to your Heavenly Father and praise Him for the truth that you no longer have to fear sin, death, evil, or the evil one.

Confess moments where you have willingly said yes to temptation instead of calling upon your Heavenly Father to empower, lead, and deliver you from evil. Confess any reoccurring sin habit and ask God to grant you true repentance. Confess your sin to someone you trust in our church family who will pray for you. (James 5:16) Ask the Lord to give you and our church a true humility and desperation for God's deliverance.

Pray that God would protect our church body from temptation, especially those that were found in the seven churches in Revelation (chapters 2 through 3).

- Pray that God would grow our faith and keep us focused on the mission of Christ.
- Pray that God would strengthen us to be faithful in the face of persecution.
- Pray that God would show us any idolatry that might be creeping into our body. Ask the Lord to provide people who will speak the truth in love.
- Pray that we would not be tempted to allow immorality to be left unconfessed or unconfessed in our church.

