

Lent Midweek 6—March 20, 2024

Text: The Lord's Prayer

Theme: The Windows of the Nave – 6th & 7th Petitions



We conclude our series on the Lord's Prayer tonight as we look at the window on the south side of the nave. Tonight, we look at the sixth and seventh petitions. Turn in your hymnals to page 324 and read the sixth and seventh petitions with me.

And lead us not into temptation.

What does this mean?

God tempts no one. We pray in this petition 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, and other great shame and vice. Although we are attacked by these things, we pray that we may finally overcome them and win the victory.

But deliver us from evil.

What does this mean?

We pray in this petition, in summary, that our Father in heaven would rescue us from every evil of body and soul, possessions and reputation, and finally, when our last hour comes, give us a blessed end, and graciously take us from this valley of sorrow to Himself in heaven.

Lead us, not into temptation. There is no punctuation in the Greek New Testament. All the punctuation in your Bible's was added by translators. I always put a comma in between "lead us" and "not into temptation" because God never leads us into temptation. We are praying here that he would lead us SO THAT we avoid the temptations into which we so readily fall. The artist who made our window shows us a serpent wrapped around North and South America. In the Garden of Eden, Satan invaded our world and his primary goal was then and is now, to tempt us. He cannot touch us because we are protected by the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, so he tries to tempt us to walk away from God. If he can get us far enough away from the power of God, our faith will weaken and eventually die. If our faith dies, the Holy Spirit has left the building and Satan can move in.

What we pray for in this petition is that God would intervene in our lives and lead us away from everything that captures our attention and draws us away from him. That can be as obviously dangerous as flirting with various cults to things seemingly innocuous as playing sports instead of worshipping the Lord. It does not matter what it is if it draws you away from Word and Sacrament. Word and Sacrament is what keeps our faith powerful and makes us a fortress for the Holy Spirit to reign.

The seventh petition fits hand in glove with the sixth petition. Deliver us from evil. The artist of the windows shows us a ship in the midst of a storm. That is our life. We call this room that you are sitting in a "nave." It is from the Latin, *navis*, which means "ship." As the church, we ride the waves of temptation and disaster and while it is not always fun, we always know that we are safe in the ship. God has promised to deliver us, His Church, from all evil and one day, we will sail into port in the Promised Land. Until then, we hang on and do the work He has given us to do knowing that no matter how violent the storm, Jesus rides with us and He has proven himself far more powerful than anything the world can throw at us.

Having said that, life in the ship can be rocky. We cannot expect our world to stop crumbling around us. That is what a dying world does. Things fall apart. We fall apart. Sometimes evil worms

its way into our lives despite our best efforts. Like the disciples in the boat were terrified in the storm and Jesus was right there with them! They had no reason to be afraid. The Lord of Life was sleeping in their boat. We are like them. Sometimes we become afraid and forget that the Lord is always with us even to the end of the age. That is why we remind ourselves in the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, "For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen." We remember that Jesus is in the boat with us and He commands everything around us to the very end, which for us, is just the beginning of eternal joy and peace.