

“COURAGEOUS FAITH: PRAYING THE LORD’S PRAYER”
“Lead Us Not Into Temptation”

We have just a few more weeks in our sermon series “Courageous Faith: Praying the Lord’s Prayer.” The prayer that Jesus taught is one of the ways we grow as disciples, leaning into God’s grace and trusting God’s love for us. Last week we looked at the phrase “*forgive us as we forgive.*” This week’s phrase, “*Lead us not into temptation*” has us asking how we can be aware and discerning of the temptations around us. On the one hand, the idea that God might lead up into temptation is uncomfortable. On the other hand, all human beings, Jesus included are tested and tempted. How we handle the small temptations may be more important than how we handle the big ones. In the Lord’s Prayer Jesus acknowledges ALL our needs, food, mercy and help in avoiding the pit falls around us. May this week, our temptations be few and the journey toward wholeness, peace and grace be easy to find. ---Pastor Cindy

Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon: **“Lead Us Not into Temptation”**

Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us bread for our needs from day to day. And forgive us our offences, as we have forgiven our offenders. And do not let us enter into temptation, but deliver us from evil (wrong, wickedness, error). For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen. (translation form the Aramaic Peshitta Texts by George M. Lamsa)

This week’s sermon may be viewed at <http://sundaystreams.com/go/firstwichita>

Study Guide

Monday, February 18, 2019 Matthew 4: 1-4

Usually the temptations of Jesus are read on the first Sunday of Lent, and we will read them from the gospel of Luke this year. Matthew, Mark and Luke all record the temptations in some way. Jesus was “lead” or “driven” into the wilderness by the “tempter” or “the devil” or “Satan.” For forty days, Jesus fasted and prayed. At the end of the forty days the tempter appears. “*If you are the Son of God...turn these stones into bread.*” Jesus was hungry and thirsty. It is not a real test or temptation unless it is really “tempting.” If Jesus could turn stones into bread, he could feed not only himself, but the whole world. Think of all the good Jesus could do! Jesus reminds the tempter “one does not live by bread alone.” In fact in the Lord’s Prayer, we are reminded that God takes care of our daily bread. This is different, Jesus could have done wonderful things...but at what cost to his soul? Many temptations are for one to do something good, but for the wrong reason. *Have you ever been tempted to do something good, but the motivation and or the reasoning was off? Have you ever justified something unethical or immoral by the good that could come from your action?*

Tuesday, February 19, 2019 Matthew 4: 5-7

The devil having tempted Jesus with doing good, in this second temptation now tries to mock Jesus. *"If you are the Son of God...prove it!"* This time the tempter begins with scripture....Everybody knows God won't let his beloved servant be hurt! Do you wonder if this was the hardest temptation for Jesus? Perhaps Jesus already knew he would have to power to feed hungry people (feeding of the 5000), or that he would be loved for his kindness and mercy. Knowing he was God's son was not proof that he was. Many people have trouble resisting the test to "prove" something. Jesus, in refusing the temptation refused to test God. *How do you find ways to resist the temptation to prove yourself? Where do you find assurance of God's grace and love when others push you?*

Wednesday, February 20, 2019 Matthew 4: 8-11

The third temptation of Jesus was a promise of power. There was no promise of "bread" for the world, only riches and power. The only thing the devil asked was to be first in Jesus' life. *"If you worship me, all the world will be yours!"* Scripture is clear about worshipping God and God only. Often, though human beings worship many things more than God. They may not have idols of stone or metal or wood, but their priorities clearly state what they may worship. Jobs, money, prestige, winning are just a few of the idols people worship. "Selling one's soul" happens a bit at a time. In this temptation of Jesus, he could have been a benevolent ruler, making the world a place of justice and peace. The cost??????? Abandoning God and worshipping the devil. Again, Jesus says no. In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus makes sure to offer us a way to acknowledge our temptations. *If you were truly honest, what are those things or ideas or possibilities that you want more than God? What tempts you to not follow Jesus and to go your own way?*

Thursday, February 21, 2019 1 Corinthians 10: 13-15

The 10th chapter begins with Paul contrasting believers in the Hebrew Scriptures with current believers. These verses read today are often misunderstood and misquoted. *"You won't be given more than you can handle,"* is often stated, which is not exactly what is written. *"No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone."* Often people misquote this to persons who are overwhelmed with terrible hardships. This talks about common burden, then promises that God is faithful and won't test beyond strength. There is nothing here about extraordinary suffering. Paul goes on to talk about the worship of idols. This is included in the reading in order to weigh these words with the words of the Lord's Prayer. *"Lead us not into temptation."* Temptations come, but God is faithful and strengthens God's people for the facing of difficult times. *Have you ever felt that struggles and problems were more than you could bear? How have you experienced God's faithfulness in times of difficulty and testing?*

Friday, February 22, 2019 1 Corinthians 10: 23-24

Between yesterday and today's readings, comes a whole section on what is acceptable for Christians to eat and what is not acceptable? There was a great deal of controversy over whether food or drink that had been offered to idols or other gods was acceptable to eat and drink as Christians. In terms of testing and temptations, Paul notes *"all things are lawful, but not all things are beneficial or build up or help others."* The *"all things are lawful"* has been used as an excuse for Christians to do whatever they want. While it may be true that all things are lawful, some things are just destructive or not helpful to others. Perhaps part of discerning whether something is a temptation or a test is to try and discover how it will help or hinder others. *Are there things in your life that are lawful but are hurtful to others? How do you avoid temptations that might hurt others? Pray the Lord's prayer and ask God to help steer you away from temptations and into greater faith.*