

## How to pray, part 7

(Luke 11:1~4)

<sup>4b</sup> *...and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.*

***Beloved, as we walk through this world, we are walking on dangerous ground...*** It may not “appear” that way, it may not “appear” to be so dangerous, but I assure you it is. Matter of fact, that’s what, makes it so dangerous. The fact that it doesn’t “appear” to be so dangerous, is what makes it so dangerous. Granted, there are many dangers that we can see, and stay clear of. There are places that are “Known” as dangerous places, places to be avoided. There are people out here, that we learn very quickly, we need to stay away from. There are things out here that we know, that we shouldn’t do, and have no part of. And all of that is good and well, and things we need to take seriously, and avoid. But those are not the real dangers that concern me...it’s the ones I cannot see, that bothers me.

Beloved, you do realize, that we are walking on the “Devil’s Domain”... You do realize that we are walking through enemies’ territory, the place where he rules and reigns, where he dwells, and moves about. Right along with all of his servants. We may not be able to see him, but I assure you, he’s out there, the *powers of darkness* are all around us! We could walk right into the midst of them, and never even know it! And again, that’s what makes them so dangerous...we *can’t see* them! We are utterly and completely “blind” to these things...

The bible describes us, as “*those who walk in darkness*”...a reference to the fact that we are “*Spiritually blind*.” Just because you’ve been tested, and been told you have 20/20 vision, that doesn’t mean you can see. Sure, you may be able to “*Physically see*,” speaking of the animate objects around you, but that does not help in the least, when it comes to *spiritual things*. As a matter of fact, if you understand it correctly, it can actually be a hindrance. The fact that we can see physically, might well serve to make us even more blind, than those who cannot see, in terms of spiritual matters. I say that, based on the fact, that our enemy uses “*our sight*” to deceive us. We are naturally prone to “*judge things and situations*” by appearances. We make most of our decisions in life, based on *the way things appear to be*. Combine that with the fact, that our adversary is a deceiver, and uses deception to get us...sight can be a dangerous thing. Satan always makes things “*look good*.” Listen, Satan is so slick, he’ll not only lead you down the wrong path, but he’ll even have you convinced, you’re ok, and that there’s nothing wrong with the path you are on.

Time and time again, I have seen this... I can’t tell you the number of young people, teenagers, college students, young married couples...(that **age group**), that Satan has deceived in this very manner. They start off, being seemingly close to the Lord, all excited and eager. Then over time, they began to drift further and further away from Him. (It’s a very slow progress) They miss here and there, they become distant, etc. They’re not “*Out of church*” per se, but it is obvious, they are not where they should be with the Lord. And they’ll tell you that...they’ll say, “*I know I’m not where I need to be...but it’s not like I’m out here doing bad things...*” I cannot tell you the number of times I’ve heard *that very statement*. And understood, it simply means they both admit and fully realize that their relationship with the Lord is not where it needs to be, they know they have drifted away from Him... Now that’s bad enough, but that’s not the worst part...the worst part is, that in their mind, they’re ok. In their mind, the fact they have drifted away from the Lord, “*is not that big a deal*.” Cause they’ll say, “*...but now, it’s not like I’m out here doing bad things...cause I’m not*.” Now what that means is, in their mind, even though they know they’re not where they need to be with the Lord, the fact they’re not out here doing bad things, then *it’s not that big a deal*... (There’s some here this morning, that are in this exact condition...)

Let me tell you what is so bad about this... Satan has managed, to draw you away from the Lord, using “*whatever*”... Most of the time, he uses “*good things*.” Whatever it is, he uses it to draw you away from the Lord, creating a “*distance*” between you and Him, in that you are not as close as you once was. Now

get this, *he's got you away from the Lord*, to the point, *you can't hear His voice like you used to...* (which is a terrible place to be in)...yet that's not the worst part. The worst part is...he's deceived you into thinking, that you're ok. "*I know I'm not where I need to be...**but it's not like** I'm out here doing **bad things**...*" Listen, you've been had brother... Listen, at this point, it doesn't matter whether you're out here doing "*bad things or good things*"... It's good that you're not doing bad things, but either way, you're walking down the wrong path, in that you're not walking with the Lord, and that makes you easy prey for the enemy!

In your eyes, you don't see this as such a dangerous path... Things are going pretty good, there are no real problems to speak of, you're happy. You're like, what's the big deal? The big deal is, you have drifted away from the Lord (of your own admission)...which means, you're out here walking on your own, as it were, and that doesn't bother you. Do you not know, that it is the sheep that wanders away from the shepherd, that gets eaten by the wolf? Do you not realize, that as the shepherd leads his sheep through the rigorous terrain, that there are wolves stalking them, looking for the opportunity to get one of those sheep. That's why the shepherd carries a rod and staff, to fight off the attacks of predators.

Peter described the enemy really well...<sup>8</sup>*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour:*

Peter describes the devil, as a vicious lion, that stands ready to tear us apart! If anybody knew this, it was Peter. Peter thought he was strong, and vowed that he would not let anyone take the Lord, he vowed that he would stand up for him. He did, and was devoured in seconds. Many are like that little innocent deer or gazelle, that walks down that seemingly innocent, harmless path, unsuspectingly, not knowing that hiding in the tall grass, is death itself, just waiting on you... He'd like to destroy your life, the life of your children, your marriage...on and on. He's just looking for any opportunity to get his foot in the door, to reap havoc in your life.

I've said all of that to say this... Beloved, we are walking on dangerous ground. This is the enemies territory, and there are dangers all around us. Dangers that we can't even see, many times it looks completely harmless. But looks are deceiving, things are not always the way they appear... Therefore, we desperately need the Lord's help...and that's what this part of the prayer is all about...

**(Vs 4b)** <sup>4b</sup> ...*and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.*

"*Temptation*" speaks of *being tested*...or *being tried*. It's important we clarify something here. God often uses trials and tribulations in our lives, as a tool or means to establish character in our lives. They are often used in transforming our lives. But it needs to be crystal clear here, that "*Temptation*" and trials are vastly different. This "*testing*" is in the negative sense, in that of ill will and harm. This is speaking of the "*Testing of Satan*," in terms of trying to entice us to sin...It speaks of how he tries to trick us into sinning.

This particular cry of the heart, comes from the individual that realizes their weaknesses, their inadequacy. This comes from one who knows the weakness of the flesh, and does not trust themselves. In its most basic form, this is a plea for God's "*Guidance & Protection*." It is a plea for God to "*establish our steps*," to "*show us the way*," through this dark and deadly, treacherous world. It is a plea "*for God's protection*" over our lives, to deliver us from the hands of the enemy.

Again, "*lead us not into temptation*" in no way is suggesting that God would "*tempt*" us, or that He might lead us into temptation. Though He does allow trials and tribulations to come into our lives, for the purpose of transforming our lives, though that is true, it needs to be clear that God does not "*tempt*" us, nor will He ever lead us *into temptation*...God would never entice men to sin. Turn with me to James 1...

**(James 1)** <sup>13</sup>Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: **for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempts he any man:** <sup>14</sup>But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. <sup>15</sup>Then when lust hath conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death.

James makes it clear, that God has NO PART of temptation... Reason being, that is from the hands of the enemy! The devil is the “*Tempter*.” He is the one who tempts us, and he does so by enticing us, or luring us into his trap, by offering us the things that our FLESH loves!

**(James 1)** <sup>14</sup>But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. <sup>15</sup>Then when lust hath conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death.

“**Drawn away**” is a Greek word used to describe wild game being lured into traps. Just as animals can be drawn to their deaths by attractive baits, temptation promises something good, which is actually harmful. No hunter walks into the woods and announces to the squirrels or deer, “I’ve come to kill you, so come on out...” No, we hide, we camouflage ourselves, we lay out bait, to get the animal to come to us. You deer hunters know this all too well, leading up to deer season, you go out and start putting out salt blocks, and feed corn for the deer’s. You do this for several weeks, getting them to the point they feel comfortable coming there and eating. They have “*no idea*” the real reason that food is there. All they know is they love salt, and they love corn...and here they find an abundance of both! Wow, they’ve hit the jackpot! No...it’s not the “*jackpot*,” but the “*crook pot*.”

The other word here “**Enticed**,” is a very similar word as well... It means *to allure*, to *entrap*...by the means of a *decoy*, a *trick*. It means “*to capture*”, to “*catch with bait*”. Fishing is a good way to describe this one. You can’t catch a fish, by throwing out an empty hook...fish may be dumb, but they’re not that dumb. So what do you do? We have to trick them, we disguise a hook with a worm or something, we entice them by what they love. Since fish love worms, when they see it hit the water, they see it as free food...when the truth is, they have just become food for someone else.

Satan is no different! This is exactly the way he works. He knows what we love, he knows our weaknesses, and he uses them against us. The traps that he sets us for us, NEVER look like traps! They always look good, they are always appealing. And that’s what makes them so dangerous! You’ve all heard that saying, “*If it looks too good to be true, it probably is...*”

Beloved, listen to what I’m saying... He uses what you love, the things you naturally enjoy, and he caters to the desires of your heart, the desires of your FLESH...**to lure you into sin**. He’ll give you “*want you want*” but you “*won’t want what you get*.” But that’s irrelevant, it comes with it.

<sup>14</sup>But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. <sup>15</sup>Then when lust hath conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death.

<sup>16</sup>Do not err, my beloved brethren. <sup>17</sup>Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

That is to say, don’t fall for what this world has to offer...it may look good, but it’s not! But rather seek those things which are above...where the truly “*good things*” come, from the one we can trust.

Beloved, it is when you understand how Satan works, and how he uses deceit to lure you away from God, to destroy your life...and how he makes it all look so good... That you are able to understand this part of the prayer that Jesus is teaching here in Luke 11:4b...

<sup>4b</sup> ...**and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.**

It is a plea for the Lord's "*Guidance & Protection.*" First, *His guidance...lead us not into temptation...* The key word here being "*Lead us.*" How does God "*lead us?*" By ***His Spirit!*** This is in contrast to being led, by "*Our flesh.*" If you walk in the "*flesh,*" you will become prey for the enemy! Because he will lure you by the desires of your flesh...which is extremely weak. That saying Jesus told Peter is true, "*The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*" We are not strong enough to overcome the attacks and allurements of the devil! But "*In Christ*"...we are more than overcomers! By His might, by His strength...by being led by His spirit...we can overcome!

The cry here comes from the heart of the one, that knows itself all too well...and does not trust itself. It reflects a heart that recognizes it's own weaknesses, and untrustworthiness...one that knows the weakness of the FLESH... It is a cry for the Lord to help!

*Lord, "Lead us...guide our steps...show us the way...through this dark, deadly treacherous world...keeping us from the hands of the enemy!"*