

When the Veil Is Taken Off

by Anne Dutton

The sermon explores the meaning of the petition 'lead us not into temptation' and emphasizes the importance of prayer for divine protection and deliverance from evil.

Scripture: Genesis 22:1, 1 Kings 13:18, 2 Chronicles 32:31, Psalm 81:11, Matthew 6:13, Luke 22:31, 1 Thessalonians 3:5, James 1:2, James 1:13

Topics: "Temptation And Sin", "Gods Sovereignty"

Description

Anne Dutton preaches on the petition 'And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil' from Matthew 6:13. She explains the meaning of temptation in various forms - from God, Satan, men, and our own hearts, encompassing afflictions and sins. Dutton emphasizes the importance of looking up to God as our heavenly Father for protection from all temptations, trusting in His sovereignty and love. She delves into the concept of God leading us into temptation as a righteous rebuke for sin, highlighting that even in allowing temptations, God's ultimate purpose is for the furtherance of our salvation.

Transcript

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Matthew 6:13

I. As to the matter of this petition, "Lead us not into temptation," we may consider, what the word temptation means; and what kind of temptation may be here intended.

1. The word temptation, taken in a large sense, signifies any kind of proof or trial that is made of any person or thing.

2. As to what kind of temptation is here intended, it may respect temptations from God, from Satan, from men, and from our own hearts, and may extend both to affliction and sin, both of which we deprecate when we pray, "Lead us not into temptation."

II. As to the Person to which this petition is addressed, which is God our heavenly Father, "Our Father who is in heaven--lead us not," we are hereby taught to look up in faith unto that God, who is the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, for preservation from all temptation, and unto Him as our Father--as our Father who is in heaven--who loves and pities us in all as a father does his children, and who is high above all, and overrules all as He pleases.

III. As to what is implied herein--that God may righteously lead us into temptation --by "Lead us not," it is implied that He may lead us, and that righteously, into temptation. We have sinned against Him in our first father Adam, and thence have derived a sinful nature from him, which is enmity against God. And our personal transgressions in heart, lip and life, in thought, word and deed, even since we knew the Lord, or rather were known of Him, are innumerable; by which we are such a provocation of His anger that He may justly give us up in a way of rebuke unto a variety of temptations both as to afflictions and sins--and sin to a child of God is indeed the greatest affliction. I say, "give us up," but I intend it in a limited sense, that is, in part and for a time, not totally nor finally; not but that our sins deserve both--but having forgiven all our iniquities, and put us among the children of His love through faith in His dear Son, He does and will deal with us according to grace--"the exceeding riches of His grace"--and never, never leave us nor forsake us in any state or case, but overrule all things, even our very temptations, for the furtherance of our salvation.

Those righteous rebukes as to afflictions on account of the sin of our nature which flow more eminently from God's sovereign will, though they carry the face of divine displeasure in them, do yet originally spring from His paternal love, and are designed and managed by Him for the purging out of corruptions and for the exercise of our graces, and in both for the furtherance of our salvation. And even those sorer rebukes, when He leads us into temptations to sin on account of our actual transgressions and repeated provocations, when He "gives us up to our own heart's lust," lets us alone when we cleave to idols, and allows our "own wickedness to correct us, and our backslidings to reprove us,"--though they carry a more severe displeasure in the face of them, yet flowing but from Fatherly anger, and not from vindictive wrath, as they spring from, so they end in, the great designs of infinite love--to purge out our corruption and further our salvation; while the Lord righteously leaves us to fall by temptation into sin, and thereby overrules the greatest evil for our good, in giving us to see in the bitter fruit what an evil and a bitter thing it is, "that we have forsaken the Lord our God, and that His fear has not been (the prevailing principle) in us;" by which through His forgiving and restoring grace, He sets our hearts more against sin than ever, and draws out our souls afresh to cleave to Him in a way of duty, and thus to have our fruit unto holiness, the end whereof will be everlasting life.

But perhaps you will say, "I know that the Lord is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works, but how can a righteous, holy God, be said to lead us into temptation?" I answer--Of God's leading His people into temptation, with regard to affliction, I suppose you have no doubt, or that God righteously may, and often does, lay that upon us and require that of us which is very afflicting to nature, in order to the trial and exercise of our graces, for His own glory and our joy; as, when He required Abraham to offer up his son--his only son--for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which He would show him--even his Isaac, whom he loved, and in whom all the promises were to be fulfilled, by the Messiah's springing from his loins--concerning which it is said, "that God did tempt Abraham" (Gen. 22:1).

And as in tribulations and persecutions for the gospel's sake, the followers of Christ are required "to deny themselves," to "take up their cross," to hate even their own lives, to love them not unto death, to "be faithful unto death," and to "resist, even unto blood (if called to it), striving against sin," etc.; in which kind of temptations, with all others that are of a like nature, though not to that degree, which Abraham's children are at any time called to endure, they are bid to rejoice, yes, to count it all joy when they fall into diverse of them (James 1:2).

Of God's leading His people into temptation in these respects, I think, my dear sister, you have no doubt; but how this holy, righteous God, can be said to lead us into temptation to sin, in a way consistent with His holiness and righteousness?--this, I suppose, is your scruple. And as to this, I have already hinted that

God righteously may, even thus, lead us into temptation as a sharp rebuke for our sins, in a way of Fatherly anger, which is entirely consistent with His paternal kindness, in turning us from all iniquity, and working us up more fully into the image of His purity. And I further add, that whenever God leads us into temptation to sin, as a just rebuke for our former sin, His righteousness and holiness therein is further manifest, in that He never does in the least thereby entice us, stir us up, or excite us to sin. No! His infinite purity, His flaming holiness, does absolutely, necessarily, and constantly forbid everything of this nature, for He is of purer eyes than to behold evil; He cannot (with the least approbation) look on iniquity (Hab. 1:13). It is impossible that an infinitely holy, righteous God, who is immutably and eternally glorious in holiness, should in any way, or at any time, excite any person unto any evil. No! "Let no man say (in this respect), when he is tempted, I am tempted of God--for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempts He any man" (James 1:13), that is, by impulsive temptation to evil.

Such active temptations to sin are to be ascribed to their proper authors--to Satan, the grand adversary, whose constant work it is to stir men up to sin against God, on which account he is called the tempter (1 Thess. 3:5); to wicked men who, as his instruments, excite one another to sin--whence it is said, "My son, if sinners entice you, consent not" (Prov. 1:10); and to our own wicked hearts, as (James 1:14)--"But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.

But, nevertheless, the holy, righteous God, as a holy, righteous chastisement for sin, may and does at times lead us into temptation to sin; and when he does do so, far is God therein from being the author of sin or any active cause thereof, in that He does not in the least thereby actively tempt us to evil, but only passively leaves us to those temptations which He justly may and does allow to fall in our way; and as God righteously may lead us into temptation, so with propriety He may be said thus to do:

1. When He allows SATAN to tempt us, as He permitted Satan to tempt Peter (Luke 22:31, 32), "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not; and when you are converted, strengthen your brethren." Satan, from his malice against the Lord and against this His zealous servant, desired to have Him, or he desired leave to tempt him (as the devils desired permission to enter the swine), that he might sift out all his graces and leave nothing in him but his corruptions. But Christ, from his love to Peter, and as a rebuke for his self-confidence, to show him the weakness of inherent grace and the strength of corruption if led into temptation, was pleased to give him up, as it were, in part and for a time unto Satan's will to tempt him, or allowed Satan to try him by his hellish policy and power, the sad effect of which was the denial of his dear Lord and Master. "But I have prayed for you that your faith fail not;" as if our Lord should say, "Though I have allowed the enemy to assault you, and he will greatly prevail against you, yet I have limited the temptation, and through my intercession for you he shall not be able to sift the principles of faith out of you. And though in the shaking time your acts of faith and zeal, in and for Me, will fail you, yet, through my forgiving and renewing grace, you shall be again recovered and strengthened, and, when you are converted, strengthen your brethren."

2. Again, God may be said to lead us into temptation: When He allows MEN to tempt us, as he allowed the old prophets to tempt the man of God that cried against the altar at Bethel (1 Kings 13:18).

3. And God may be said to lead us into temptation: When He allows the CORRUPTIONS OF OUR OWN HEARTS to tempt us, as (Psalm 81:11, 12), "But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of Me. So I gave them up unto their own heart's lust, and they walked in their own counsels."

4. Once more, God may be said to lead us into temptation: WHEN HE WITHHOLDS THE INFLUENCE OF HIS GRACE FROM US, which alone can keep us from yielding to temptation, as He left Hezekiah to try him that he might know all that was in his heart (2 Chron. 32:31). And as God righteously may allow Satan, men, and sin to tempt us, and withhold the influence of His grace from us when we grieve and vex his Holy Spirit, so, when we are thus led into temptation, the sad consequence thereof, through the strength of our soul-enemies, and our weakness, will be a wretched compliance with temptation to sin, to God's dishonor and our soul's wounding. And therefore, a hint or two:

IV. As to our duty and privilege daily to pray. If God justly may lead us into temptation with respect to affliction, which, through the weakness of our nature, will expose us to great danger of sinning against Him, and if He righteously may lead us into temptation, even unto sin itself, in both which, if He leaves us, we shall certainly fall into evil, to His dishonor and our wounding, oh, how much does it concern us daily to pray, "lead us not into temptation;" how great is our duty thus to supplicate the divine throne, and how great is our privilege that we may thus address our Father who is in heaven, who is infinite in wisdom, and has many ways to prevent our being led into temptation; who is infinite in grace, and is always ready to hear the prayers of His dear children; and who is almighty in power, and well able to protect us from all dangers, and to defend us from all our spiritual enemies. It is an honor due to our heavenly Father, that we thus pray to Him daily, "lead us not into temptation," and a privilege unspeakable hereby is cast upon us His children, in the enjoined duty.

I shall close with a few hints from the latter part of this petition, by showing--What evil we deprecate; and what salvation we implore, when we pray, "but deliver us from evil."

1. We hereby pray against the evil of sin, that if God at any time, or in any measure, should lead us into temptation, we may be delivered from the hurt of it, that we may be seasonably supported in, and graciously delivered out of, temptation. We likewise hereby pray that we may be delivered from evil men and from the evil one, Satan, who is the principle author of all evil.

2. The salvation we implore when we pray, "but deliver us from evil," consists in this, the forgiveness of all our sins so far as by temptation we have fallen, or may be left to fall into sin; the subduing of all our iniquities, and the utter destruction of all sin, with all the effects of it, both as to soul and body, unto the complete and everlasting salvation of our whole persons through God's free grace by Jesus Christ, to the eternal praise of His glory, and to our eternal joy.

And thus the conclusion of this excellent directory for prayer, which glances upon all its foregoing parts, fitly comes in upon the close of the sixth petition--"for yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen." By which we give unto God as our Father in Christ the glory due unto His name, and acknowledge Him to be the true and living God, and an everlasting King; that He has a right to rule over all things for his own glory; that He has prepared His own throne in the heavens, and that His kingdom rules over all; that He works all things in providence, according to the good pleasure of His eternal will; that His kingdom of right should come, and that by His power and for His glory it shall come, to the complete salvation of His people, and the utter destruction of all His and their enemies; and that we approve of and choose Him for our King, that we give up ourselves to Him to be His subjects, that we rejoice in His government, and long for the spreading of the glories of His kingdom over all, in testimony whereof, and in confidence of our prayers being heard, we say, Amen.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/anne-dutton/when-the-veil-is-taken-off/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net