

Last week we discussed **Matthew 6:13** – “**And lead us not into temptation...**” **Thomas a’ Kempis** said: “The beginning of all temptation lies in a wavering mind and little in God, for as a rudderless ship is driven hither and yon by waves, so a careless and irresolute man is tempted in many ways.” **Thomas** says temptation does not begin with God, but rather with our wondering minds.

How are we to control our wondering minds so that we are not led into temptation? What is an irresolute man? Why is he tempted?

Matthew 6:13 - “**...but deliver us from the evil one.**” What do you think **Jesus** is telling us to pray here?

Let’s dissect what the words “**evil one**” and “**deliver us**” meant in the days of **Jesus**: (reverse)



Earl F. Palmer (1931- 2023) was a Presbyterian preacher and Bible expositor. Some of his most popular books are: **The Humor of Jesus: Sources of Laughter in the Bible**, **The Enormous Exception: Meeting Christ in the Sermon on the Mount**, **Trusting God: Christian Faith in a World of Uncertainty**, and **Laughter in Heaven: Understanding the Parables of Jesus**.

“(**Saint John**) **Chrysostom** tells us that by this prayer – “**deliver us from the evil one**” – we signal once and for all that we are engaged as Christians in a battle against all forms of evil, a battle that knows no truce.”

Why is there no truce when dealing with evil? Once we recognize this, how does that change our reaction to evil?

“The seventeenth-century Puritan **Thomas Watson** put it very well in his commentary on the Lord’s Prayer – “Satan envies man’s happiness. To see a clod of dust so near to God, and himself, once a glorious angel, cast out of heavenly paradise, makes him pursue mankind with inveterate hatred.” Have you ever thought of yourself as being pursued by Satan? How does that make you feel?

Palmer says: “The power of this brief and crystal-clear petition in the Lord’s Prayer rests in its ability to set us free from the need to fear the evil one. This is the only sentence we need to make use of in order to exorcise demons and all of the evil charades of our generation.” What is **Palmer** telling us about this sentence in the Lord’s Prayer? Why is it so powerful?

“It is never correct either theologically or practically to say “the devil made me do it.” The devil only tempts; we are the ones who decide and act.” What is **Palmer** saying about the devil and what he is capable of?

Why would someone attribute power to Satan that he actually does not have? How does this effect their accountability of sin?

“There is a larger battle before us than simply the contest between our own selfishness and the good will of God. Against such evil therefore there must be a warrior who fully understands the total scale of the battle. There is such a warrior, and only one.”

How are we as Christians be a part of that battle? What does it take to follow that “one warrior”?



Pope Benedict XVI (1927 – 2022) German cleric **Joseph Ratzinger** was the head of the Catholic Church and sovereign of Vatican City from 2005 until his resignation in 2013. Following his resignation, he chose to be known as “**pope emeritus**”, a title he held until his death in 2022.

I Cor. 10:13 – **Paul** wrote: “No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear.” What does this mean to you?

If God can limit how much you are tempted, what does this say about His relationship with Satan?

Pope Benedict says: “When you (God) decide to send me these trials, when you give evil some room to maneuver, as you did with **Job**, then please remember that my strength goes only so far. Don’t overestimate my capacity.” What is **Benedict** saying here?

Who sent the trials to **Job**? How did he react to them and how was he able to react in this way? Why is this important?



Romano Guardini (1885 - 1968) was a German Catholic priest, academic, and spiritual writer. His most popular books are: **The Lord (1937)**, **The Spirit of the Liturgy (1918)**, **The End of the Modern World (1950)**, **The Art of Praying (1943)**, **Letters from Lake Como (1927)**, and **Learning the Virtues (1998)**.

Guardini says: “The evil I have to contend with is a distillation (a technique used to separate components of a liquid mixture based on differing boiling points), from past evil that comes from others or myself. This evil, then, enkindles further evil, which bears new seed of evil; one arises continually out of the other, and so the evil chain is unending.” What is **Guardini** saying here?

“When the last war started, its force had been accumulated from the wickedness of millions of hearts, from the evil in the depths of the human race.” What war is **Guardini** referring to here? How did this war start according to **Guardini**?

“Therefore, the petition “**Deliver us from evil**” means: Grant that the rightful chain reaction may be broken by which evil continually arises out of wickedness and, in turn, engenders new evil.” **Guardini** says that this chain of evil can be broken in each heart that gives itself to God. What does evil do to the heart? How does this affect society, judgement, and wisdom?

Rom. 5:12-13 – **Paul** wrote: “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man,” Who was this?

“and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned – for before the law (**Mosaic Law**) was given, sin was in the world.” Physical death is the penalty for sin. It is also the symbol of spiritual death, man’s ultimate separation from God.

What was the world like between the time of Adam and Noah and Moses? What does the flood and exodus tell us about this time? “But sin is not taken into account when there is no law.” When there was no **Mosaic Law**, sin was not charged against man. People between **Adam & Moses** were involved in the sin of someone else, namely, Adam. Thus death continued. Have you thought of this?

Mosaic Law (or the **Law of Moses**) - is the foundational legal and religious system given by God to the Israelites, as recorded in the first five books of the **Bible** (the **Torah**). It encompasses 613 commandments, including the **Ten Commandments**.

We are living in a time after **Moses**, the **Mosaic Law**, and **Christ**. How does sin differ now from the sin of man before **Moses**?

Guardini continues: “...the realization breaks through that only God can truly do something about it (sin). And the longing swells for the coming of that which not only can turn all things good, but also leads into the new: the end of time, which is the breakthrough of the eternal.”

Hang onto your hat. It’s going to get a little bumpy.

1. The Evil One (*Pônêros* in Greek / *Bîšā* in Aramaic)

In Aramaic, the concept of evil comes from the root word *bîšā* (or *bisha*), which can be translated as "evil" or "the evil one".

- **A Personal Force:** In Semitic languages, this word is often personified. Scholars and translations (like the Syriac Peshitta) often lean toward "the evil one" to emphasize a personal enemy—Satan—who tempts, deceives, and seeks to destroy humanity.
Have you ever thought of why Satan wants to destroy humanity? What are Satan's motives for this?
- **Abstract Evil:** It also encompasses the broader idea of calamity, malice, moral corruption, and everything that causes pain & suffering in daily life. We often see evil all around us in this world today.
How are we often deceived into evil?

2. Deliver (*Rhuomai* in Greek / *Pasan* in Aramaic)

The word for "deliver" carries the weight of rescue and separation.

- **To Rescue:** In Aramaic (*pasan*), it means to separate or set free.
Why as a Christian do we want to be freed from evil?
- **Spiritual Warfare:** In biblical context, it is a desperate cry for God to physically and spiritually shield His people from being overcome by the Devil's tests.
Can you think of a time in your life when you were freed from an evil situation?