

Sovereign Grace Church

“Temptation” outline

August 26, 2018

HC 127

This morning we will continue our study of the Heidelberg's biblical teaching on prayer. There are a number of petitions that the Lord's Prayer suggests should characterize our prayers. This morning we will look at our asking God NOT to lead us into temptation.

Some may think this rather odd in that it is through temptation that we have opportunity to grow and manifest our righteousness. The problem with this is that they are also profound opportunities to fall on our spiritual keisters! The catechism appeals to our natural weakness along with the strength of our enemies to suggest that we are better off using more positive means to grow spiritually than run the risk of deeper defeat via temptation. It is certainly true that we can get so hardened to positive growth that temptation may be the only way to break through. God seeks our growth but He also loves us and pities us. He does not enjoy seeing us have to suffer in order to grow but he does love us enough to allow this to happen when necessary. Even Jesus prayed to be released from the temptation to forego the Cross. We tend to only pray for God's intervention when we are in crisis....we forget that our whole lives are in crisis. This morning we will consider temptation and why we should pray to be delivered from it.

1. Temptation I Jn. 3:4; Rom. 13:10

- **Can God tempt us? Jms 1:13; Gen. 22:1; Jn 6: 5-6**

2. Our Need Jn 15: 5; Rom. 7:22-23; Matt. 26:33

3. Our Enemies

- **The world I Jn 2: 15-17**

- **The flesh Rom. 7: 23**

- **The Devil Eph. 6:12-13; I Pet 5: 8**

4. Our Lord's Help

- **The Holy Spirit Eph 3:16; 4: 30-32**
- **Immediate Result: Strengthened II Thess 3:3 Matt 26:41**
- **Ultimate Result: Victory I Thess 3:13; 5:23**

Questions for Conversation and Reflection

- 1. How does our request for the Lord to not lead us into temptation correlate with James' assertion that God does not tempt anyone? How then was it possible for the Holy Spirit to drive Jesus into the desert to be tempted by Satan? (Matt. 4)**
- 2. What have been some of your personal struggles with temptation? What sorts of temptations do you find particularly troublesome? How have you fared in your struggle?**
- 3. Is it possible for a temptation to be so strong that we simply cannot resist it? How does I Cor. 10:13 help us answer this question? How does our understanding of *grace* help us answer it? What is grace? Does God's grace usually function if we do nothing? Why is this not a very likely scenario?**
- 4. How is one tempted to face temptation while a resident of their own little kingdom? How does living in Christ's Kingdom make such a profound difference?**
- 5. What is the difference between legalism and libertinism? How do they both impede advancement in Christ's Kingdom? Is it enough to externally obey the law "in exhaustive detail"? Is it possible to truly love someone apart from a concern to obey the commandments?**