

# The LPG

## Lead Us Not Into

February 7, 2021

Good Morning my HP Family! If you're visiting, welcome home. I'm pastor Bruce; and on behalf of everyone, I want to welcome you to where we're learning to not buy the lie that *we're* selling.

**Face any new temptations this week?** Or just the same ol' grind?



The **Lord's Prayer Guide** leads us to start each day: **adoring our Dad**, and **revering our Creator**, and **hallowing our God** (by discussing your obedience and trust), **kneeling to our King** (to plan to advance *His* kingdom), **yielding to His will** as *our* Lord, **requesting just enough dough** (so we're not distracted from our Bread of Life), **confessing our mess** of committed sins so our Judge can wipe our slate, as *we're* imitating our Mentor and **canceling the debts** of the sins of others. And then it's time to talk about the *potential* sins of the day; and so today we say:



And lead us NOT INTO temptation,<sup>1</sup> – Matthew 6:13 KJV

Not the most *intuitive* line in the LPG. Does Dad not *automatically* lead us in the other direction? Brother James is *not* unclear at *all* when he says:



When tempted, *no* one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot *be* tempted by evil, nor does *He* tempt anyone; – James 1:13 NIV



**[However]** Jesus was led *by* the *Spirit* into the desert to *be* tempted *by* the *devil*. **[Which was actually a really good thing]** – Matthew 4:1 NIV



For we do *not have* a high priest who is *not able* to sympathize with our weaknesses, but who has *been* tempted in *all* things in the *same* way, without *sin*. **[Notice, it's not a sin to be tempted]** – Hebrews 4:15 LEB

And **it's not unloving to lead someone to a place of temptation/testing** in order to guide them to not *give in* to it.

Two Greek words (peirazō; peirasmos) are interchangeably translated: **temptation**, **test**, and **trial**;<sup>2</sup> because they mean more-or-less the same thing. And brother James explains that **God does not do the tempting, but does allow the testing**; (1:2-4) because this testing/tempting/trial has a loving, eternal purpose. So, just as the Holy Spirit *took* Jesus to a dance with the *devil*, our Shepherd will take *us* to a *place* of temptation, in order to *lead* us through it.

<sup>1</sup> This line is from the KJV rather than the NKJ which reads: "Do not lead us into temptation"

<sup>2</sup> All three variations of both peirazo *and* peirasmos can be seen in 1 Corinthians 10:13 in the NKJ, NRS, and NAB.

This can be a bit confusing at first, so listen closely: **Does God tempt us? No.** He's a loving Father. **Does God test us? Yes.** He's a loving Father. **Can there be a test without a temptation? No.** So, *what's* the difference between *doing* the tempting and *allowing* the testing?



*Good parenting!* If you're a good parent, **you'd never tempt your teen** to get drunk or high, or to commit sexual sin; **but, you'll drive 'em to the prom!** And you know full well they'll be dancing with all three of these temptations. You're *not* ignorant (notwithstanding what your teen thinks). The reason we're not outright opposed to these types of events is because, our only other option is to not allow them to **develop** and **strengthen** and **mature** and ... you know, that's *life*.



And that's why we advise 'em and warn 'em even as we drive 'em to their dance. In this way, **we take them TO temptation** – that is, to the place where they face the test – **but never INTO temptation.** Just the opposite. We hope and pray they'll follow our lead, *not* into it.



And just like *our* Shepherd, **we prepare 'em as much as we can:** arming them with our insight, and providing a way of escape, so they can bear it with our help (“You call right away if there's trouble”). But, just like our Father in heaven, we're limited in our efforts to safeguard by our kid's own free willingness to receive and act on what we've offered.



And God is faithful; He will *not* let you be tempted *beyond* what you can bear **[by utilizing everything you're receiving from what He's offering]**. But when you *are* tempted, He will *also* provide a way out **[Call Me]** so that you can *stand up under it*. – 1 Corinthians 10:13 NIV



And what happens when we consistently stand up under a weight? Our muscles *grow*. **We stand under a load so they'll stress and heal stronger.** It's the same way spiritual muscle grows. Just before brother James assures us that God doesn't tempt us, he said:

Blessed is the one who perseveres *under trial* because, having *stood* the *test*, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who *love* Him.  
– James 1:12 NIV

Temptations come in two forms: **avoidable** and **unavoidable**. So we must follow our Good Shepherd's lead not into but **away from the avoidable**, and not into but **through the unavoidable**. Because our Shepherd is faithful; He'll not allow what we cannot handle ... *without Him*. Because, in this world, **we must learn to trust His lead and lean on His Word.**

So, when are *you* most often dropped off at the dance, and not on your best behavior?

That's why we **PRAY** “lead us *not* into temptation,” and **PAUSE** to identify *this* day the avoidable and unavoidable temptations bound to come our way. And then we **PERSONALIZE** this portion by discussing our plans to avoid the avoidable and to follow closely through the unavoidable.

Each time *Jesus* was tempted – and we’re told He *suffered* when He was tempted (Heb 2:18) – what was the *way* of escape our Father provided? Scripture stockpiled in Jesus’ heart. Whatever the enemy threw at Him, He resisted him and riddled him with Scripture, and stood His ground.

Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.’” [Then the *devil* fled] – Matthew 4:10 NKJ

There’s a time to flee from sin, and a time to stand your ground at the dance! It’s confusing in the midst of it, which is why we plan for it, so we’re not caught off guard by it. Because down here, in the place we mature, things can seem a bit backwards: **we don’t learn the lesson till after the test.** Because that’s how the tearing and repairing of *spiritual* muscle works. We got’a lean into it and resist it. Because, **if we won’t stand under, we won’t understand.**



So, should we ask Dad to *not* drive us to the dance? Not possible. **We face a daily dance with both avoidables and unavoidable.** And even though it feels like the battle is with that sale on shoes, or juicy piece of gossip, or low-cut blouse, that’s *not* where this dance takes place.



Remember the scary campfire story where a babysitter gets murderous threats on the phone? So she nails all the doors and windows shut, and calls the police. And they say ... *what?* “The call is coming from *inside!*” Well *brace* yourself. There’s a reason Dad wants to drive us to the dance every day. Guess where it’s being held. **It’s inside our heart!** Oh, and it’s the kind of dance boxers do in the ring. Brother James says:



Each one is tempted when, by his *own* evil *desire*, he is dragged away and enticed. – James 1:14 NIV



So, there’s no avoiding it. Because, **it’s a battle between you and ... you.** So better make your daily plan to flee when you can, and to stand when you must. So He can lead you into not buying whatever you’re selling.

[Because] The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. [And the call is coming from inside] Who can understand it? – Jeremiah 17:9 NIV

Well, I suppose those who’ve gone a few rounds and stood their ground, and desire to ...

Serve [God] with a *loyal heart* and with a *willing mind*; for the Lord searches all *hearts* and understands all the *intent* of the *thoughts*. – 1 Chronicles 28:9 NKJ

“Obey *My* voice, and I will be your *God*, and you shall be *My* people.” ... But [they] followed the *counsels* and the *dictates* of their evil *hearts*, – Jeremiah 7:23-24 NKJ

Each *one* follows the dictates of his *own* evil heart ... *no one listens* – Jeremiah 16:12 NKJ

Evil people, who *refuse* to hear *My Words*, who follow the dictates of their *hearts*, – Jeremiah 13:10 NKJ

They *refused* to love the *truth* and so be saved. For *this* reason God sends them a powerful delusion, *leading them to believe* what is *false*, – 2 Thessalonians 2:10-11 NRS

He has *scattered* the *proud* in the imagination of their hearts. – Luke 1:51 NKJ

He blesses *himself* in his *heart*, saying, ‘I shall have peace, even though I follow the dictates of *my heart*’ – Deuteronomy 29:19 NKJ

“Return now ... and make your ways and your doings good.” And they said, “That is hopeless! So we will walk according to our own plans, and we will every one obey the dictates of his evil heart.” – Jeremiah 18:11-12 NKJ

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. – Isaiah 53:6 NIV

Watch therefore, and pray *always* that *you* may be counted worthy to *escape all* these things that *will* come to pass, and to *stand* before the Son of Man. – Luke 21:36 NKJ

Rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all *kinds* of trials. *These* have come *so that* your faith ... may be *proved* genuine and may *result* in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not *seen* Him, you *love* Him ... you *believe* in Him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious *joy*, for you *are* receiving the *goal* of your faith, the salvation of your souls. – 1 Peter 1:6-9 NIV

**[So]** Consider it pure *joy* ... whenever you face *trials* of many kinds, because *you* know that the *testing* of your *faith* develops *perseverance*. – James 1:2-3 NIV

People get hung up on the negative grammatical construct of “lead us *not into*”. But it’s only odd because it’s unfamiliar. A student on an English translation site asked: “What does ‘**I’m not into it**’ mean? I can’t grasp it.” Another answered: English-speakers say “not into” as a polite way of saying “I don’t like it.” Like: “She’s *not into* you.” “Is it because I’m *not into* Harry Potter?” We actually use negative grammatical constructs all the time.

Here’s a few of several I’ve used in *this* sermon: It’s not the most intuitive; James is not unclear; It’s not unloving; Guide them to not give in; We’re not opposed to these; You’re not on your best behavior; We’re not caught off guard.

I replaced the NKJ with the more literal KJV because **we shouldn’t pray “Don’t lead us,”** but knowing we’re going to that dance, to say “Do lead us (whether around or through) *not into* the not-so-good we wanna do.” **It’s not a prayer to be spared but strengthened.** Brother James says:



*Submit* to God. *Resist* the devil and *he* will flee from *you*. – James 4:7 NKJ



We’re getting a text at that dance: “Hey, want to get drunk?” **“No. I’m not into that.”** “Why?” **“God led me to be not into it.”** “Think He’d *lead* me to be *not into* it?” **“Sure. Just ask Him to lead you to be not into that temptation.”** Hmm. *Not bad*. Oh, and *this* text is from Jesus at the Garden of Gethsemane, when He was facing His last and greatest temptation, the night before the cross; and warning His disciples why to pray this way.

Watch and pray so that you will **not fall into** temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak [without some resistance training]. – Matthew 26:41 NIV

So maybe we should watch and pray **“lead us not (to fall) into temptation.”**

**And then make a plan for the avoidable ones that call us to come.**

**And the unavoidable ones that come to us.**

We only have three tempting options: **flee from it**, or **stand up under it**, or **fall for it**. So what'll it be? This is not a prayer to be spared from the battle, but to be led right to it, and then around it or through it, clad in the full armor of God, and ready to rumble, whenever we're tempted to fall for the call that comes from inside – and it's time to face the music ... *and dance!*

Now let's memorize together what we'll personalize alone.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. YOUR kingdom come. YOUR will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us THIS day our DAILY bread. And forgive us our debts, AS we forgive OUR debtors. And LEAD US not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. – Matthew 6:9-13 NKJ<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> “lead us not” is from the KJV