

Lutheran Women in Mission



God Wins? Yes! by Judy Lessmann

(Last in our series on the Lord's Prayer: Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and forever. Amen.)

Opening

Sing "Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways" (LW 392, TLH 416, LBW 480) or "Hear, O Lord, I Raise My Voice" (*The Other Songbook*).

Temptation is a challenging word. It can mean "tempting to sin" or "testing." Let's look at this petition from both perspectives.

Tempting to Sin

Does God ever tempt us? See **James 1:13-14**.

What are we really asking for in the sixth petition? See **1 Corinthians 10:13** and **Hebrews 2:18**.

God is committed to protecting us from temptation to sin and to giving us the strength to resist it when it rears its ugly head. Jesus conquered sin by His death on the cross. Through His resurrection after his descent into hell, He showed the devil, "I win-you lose!" But Satan is still thrashing around the world making good use of the time he has left before God seals his fate forever.

1. Where have you seen evidence of his activity in your community recently?
2. In our nation? (Do not think only in terms of overt actions, but also attitudes and desires.)
3. Has your church been affected by Satan's activity? How?
4. How about your family?

Scripture encourages us to resist temptation. What do the following passages say?

- **Proverbs 1:10** (Does this remind you of any commercials on smoking and use of drugs?)
- **Proverbs 4:14**
- **Romans 6:12-13**
- **2 Peter 3:17-18**
- **Ephesians 6:13.**

Testing

This isn't any more pleasant to think of than tempting, is it? Testing conjures up all kinds of bad feelings about unpleasant events from school exams to medical tests. It's no wonder we ask Jesus

not to lead us to testing! By nature we go kicking and screaming into the fire of testing, even though we know God will be with us. Yet that is the very place He takes us to strengthen and purify us.

Last Easter Sunday my youngest son was involved in a very serious auto accident. For a while we did not know if he would live. Then we didn't know what he would be like if he did live. (Many LWMLers prayed for him through this ordeal.) None of us would have chosen this time of testing, and yet through it we felt the faithfulness of God and His people. He brought us to the other side with deeper faith and understanding.

Share a time when God brought you through a test (severe or not).

Deliver Us from Evil

Earlier in the Lord's Prayer we pray for daily bread even though we know He will supply our needs. So now we pray "Deliver us from evil" even though He promises He will. Why? This focuses our thoughts on Him and acknowledges our weakness. Recall the deliverance of the children of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. The Lord promised to do it and He did-though not the way they might have chosen. What does God promise us in these verses?

- **Job 5:19**
- **2 Samuel 22:2-4**
- **Jeremiah 1:8**

Keep this perspective in mind as we move on to the glorious doxology of the Lord's Prayer.

Kingdom, Power and Glory Forever

"For Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory forever and ever. Amen." What a statement! How do you react when you hear or say it? Why?

Kingdom Read **Psalm 24:7-10**. How does the Psalmist describe our King? As a child of the King, what confidence does that give you?

Power Read **Ephesians 1:17-22** aloud to get the full impact of this section. How does Paul describe the power of God working in us? What confidence does that give you?

Glory Read **Exodus 24:9-10, 15-17**. How did the children of Israel view the glory of God?

Read **Luke 2:9**. What was the shepherds' reaction?

What examples and reasons for praising God do we find in the following? **Revelation 4:9-11, 5:11-14, and 7:9-12**.

We do not have the opportunity to participate in this heavenly praise now, but we do have the privilege of honoring God with our lives. Give examples of how we can praise God every day in every circumstance.

Amen

Yes! We believe this. We acknowledge all aspects of this wonderful prayer to be true. To God be the Glory!

Close by saying The Lord's Prayer together slowly and thoughtfully.



Judy Lessmann is president of the Gulf States LWML District, and her husband, the Rev. Dr. Richard P. Lessmann, is its Senior Counselor. They are the parents of three sons and grandparents of six children.
