

## LHCF Sermon Discussion Guide

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### Connecting with God: The Lord's Prayer—Part 6B The Importance of Protection

*“And lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from the evil one” Matt. 6:13*

#### 1. Facts about temptation

- **God never tempts anyone**

*“When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.” James 1:13-14*

- **Temptation is not a sin**

*“Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.” Matt. 4:1*

- **Yielding to temptation is a choice**

*“The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, He will show you a way out so that you can endure.” 1 Cor. 10:13*

#### 2. The “way out” of temptation

- **Develop a Spirit-led lifestyle**

*“...obey only the Holy Spirit's instructions. He will tell you where to go and what to do, and then you won't always be doing the wrong things your evil nature wants you to. For we naturally love to do evil things that are just the opposite from the things that the Holy Spirit tells us to do; and the good things we want to do when the Spirit has his way with us are just the opposite of our natural desires. These two forces within us are constantly fighting each other to win control over us...” Gal. 5:16-17*

- **Identify what makes you vulnerable**

*“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.” Matt. 26:41*

- **Guard your \_\_\_\_\_**

*“Above all else, guard your heart, for it affects everything you do.” Prov. 4:23*

- **Turn your attention \_\_\_\_\_**

*“Thinking about your commands will keep me from doing some foolish things.” Psalm 119:6*

*“Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil with good.” Rom. 12:21*

- **Get a \_\_\_\_\_ and a \_\_\_\_\_**

*“Two are better than one, because together...if one falls down, the other can help him up. But if someone is alone and falls...there's no one to help him.” Eccl. 4:9-10*

*“Brothers and sisters, if someone in your group does something wrong, you who are spiritual should go to that person and gently help make him right again. But be careful, because you can be tempted to sin, too. By helping each other with your troubles, you truly obey the law of Christ.” Gal. 6:1-2*

#### Small Group Life:

The Bible is filled with the idea that a believer is at war. But remember that our enemy is Satan and our sinful nature.

Remember the battle is a spiritual battle...like the way Message Bible describes it: Eph 6:10-14 “God is strong, and He wants you strong. So take everything the Master has set out for you, well-made weapons of the best materials. And put them to use so you will be able to stand up to everything the Devil throws your way. This is no afternoon athletic contest that we'll walk away from and forget about in a couple of hours. This is for keeps, a life-or-death fight to the finish against the Devil and all his angels. Be prepared. You're up against far more than you can handle on your own. Take all the help you can get, every weapon God has issued, so that when it's all over but the shouting you'll still be on your feet...”

Begin by taking the quiz on the last page that will help you determine how strong or vulnerable you are right now!

- Identify what makes you vulnerable. Read Matt. 26:41
  - Matt 26 “in other words, you may be willing to overcome your temptation but will power is not enough”.
  - So what are we to watch for? The circumstances that make us vulnerable. Your vulnerabilities are actually connected to your S.H.A.P.E.
  - Some argue that our habits and hang-ups are about:
    - our genetics
    - nature vs. nurture
    - character vs. circumstances
  - I believe they all play a role, but the point is you don’t really get to choose your temptations because they’re unique to your make-up.
  - Why we’re perplexed that someone rages or has an addictive personality... we can’t relate because that’s not how my DNA operates.
  - *Remember everyone’s temptations are different because everyone is unique, one of a kind.*
  - Overcoming temptation is helped when we understand how our strengths and weaknesses are all a part of our S.H.A.P.E.  
Examples:
    - Goal-oriented person, vulnerable to frustration and anger (due to interruptions)
    - Kindness person, vulnerable to exhaustion (due to over-functioning)
    - Excellence person, vulnerable to worry/fear (due to procrastination waiting for a perfect start)
    - Gentle person, vulnerable to passivity (due to not wanting to risk hurting another’s feelings)
    - Mercy person, vulnerable to guilt (due to feeling they haven’t done enough to help another’s pain)
  - Remember we all become vulnerable when we are filled with frustration/anger, exhaustion, worry/fear, passivity, guilt.
  - Get to know your patterns and ask the following questions:
    - When? *Morning, late afternoon, lunch.*
    - Where? *Kitchen, business trip, 7-11, in front of your computer.*
    - Who? *Certain friends that lead me down the wrong path, when I’m alone, my parents.*

- What? *Identify the temporary benefit. How? How do I feel just before the temptation.*
  - Why do this? *Talk with God about it, your spiritual partner, and makes plans to resolve the issues.*
  - Pro. 4:26-27 “*Plan carefully what you do... Avoid evil and walk straight ahead. Don’t go one step off the right way.*”
- Guard your **heart**. Read Prov. 4:23
    - So how can we guard our heart?
    - Phil. 4:4-9 gives us detailed steps (context or problems) “*Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me — put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.*”
    - Rejoice – remember God is always working in our circumstances.
    - Respond – don’t react but respond with kindness.
    - Request – Pray with thanksgiving – convert worry to prayer.
    - Renew your mind: Take control of your thought life – you don’t have to think negatively
    - Repeat – stay at what God downloads in you.
- Turn your attention **elsewhere**. Read Ps. 119:6 & Rom. 12:21
    - This is the law of replacement
    - No where does the Bible tell us to resist temptation... Devil tries to tell us to resist, but that’s another sermon.
    - Remember the more we focus on what we’re trying to avoid the more we fall to it.
    - Ps. 119 – David learned that by focusing on God’s word and who He is and this kept him from yielding to temptation (foolish things).
    - Paul adds to the idea of replacement by stating that we conquer evil by doing good.
    - How can we overcome OCD?
      - Where do you struggle? Drinking, lust, avoidance, criticalness, etc...

- Effective principle is after we've committed to a spirit led lifestyle, identified our vulnerabilities and guarded our heart
  - Not so helpful if we haven't because were inwardly unfulfilled and therefore have a strong "want" for the unhealthy practice.
- Get in a **group** and get a **partner**. Read Eccl, 4:9-10 "*Two are better than one, because together...if one falls down, the other can help him up. But if someone is alone and falls...there's no one to help him.*" and Gal. 6:1-2 "*Brothers and sisters, if someone in your group does something wrong, you who are spiritual should go to that person and gently help make him right again. But be careful, because you can be tempted to sin, too. By helping each other with your troubles, you truly obey the law of Christ.*"
- Remember Eccl. 4 It's God's idea to use other's for support, need for support isn't about weakness, it's about humanness... we're made this way.
  - What can we learn from Gal. 6?
    - Written to the family... "brothers and sisters..."
    - "someone in your group does something wrong" in my small group we confess our struggles, discouragement and failures regularly.
    - "you who are spiritual should go to that person and gently help..." we pray for one another, love on each other, prophetically speak heaven's love and grace to one another
    - As we "help each other with troubles..." "we obey the law of Christ, which is to love one another"
    - Jesus said "by this shall all men know you are my disciples, that you love one another"
    - Sign up and become part of a small group today!

**Mission or Ministry as appropriate** – Who can you invite to your group or minister to that is having trouble trusting God... don't let them battle that alone, help them get in a small group and open up!

**Discipleship** – God gives us free will but also invites us to seek Him with all our heart to please Him, to enjoy His plan for our lives, and to fulfill His purposes. If we are to mature to be more Christ-like and find satisfaction, significance, and meaning in our lives, we should follow his example. What actions can you begin to take to help reveal God's plan for your life?

**Personal Application and Commitment** – If we seek God instead of seeking a solution, God will give us the solution. What are you seeking – fulfillment; power; happiness? What you are really looking for is God. Is God trying to get your attention? Are you trying to pursue your own priorities instead of God's plan for you? Is God waiting for you to trust and follow Him? In what areas do you find trusting or following God difficult for you? What would help you to actively participate in God's plan for your life? Pray about making a commitment to join and become actively involved in a Small Group.

**SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE ANSWER KEY:**  
 Guard your **heart**; Turn your attention **elsewhere**;  
 Get a **group** and a **partner**

### How Vulnerable to Temptation Are You?

|                                 |           |  |
|---------------------------------|-----------|--|
| <i>Physically exhausted</i>     | 0 1 2 3 4 | <i>Energetic &amp; in shape</i>        |
| <i>Discouraged/pessimistic</i>  | 0 1 2 3 4 | <i>Encouraged &amp; hopeful</i>        |
| <i>Bored &amp; discontented</i> | 0 1 2 3 4 | <i>Challenged &amp; contented</i>      |
| <i>Spiritually dry or empty</i> | 0 1 2 3 4 | <i>Spiritually alive &amp; growing</i> |
| <i>Distant from others</i>      | 0 1 2 3 4 | <i>Close to those you love</i>         |
| <i>Insecure or unsure</i>       | 0 1 2 3 4 | <i>Confident &amp; secure</i>          |
| <i>Wounded/deeply hurt</i>      | 0 1 2 3 4 | <i>Loved &amp; understood</i>          |
| <i>Bitter or angry</i>          | 0 1 2 3 4 | <i>Forgiven everyone</i>               |
| <i>Sad</i>                      | 0 1 2 3 4 | <i>Happy</i>                           |
| <i>Like you've failed</i>       | 0 1 2 3 4 | <i>Successful</i>                      |

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_