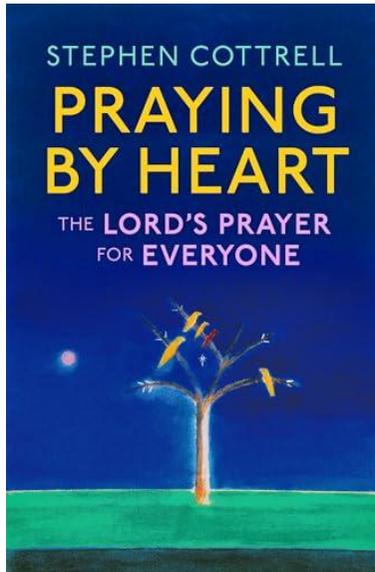


Week Four – Summary 2

Part Three – ‘Three Humble Requests’ cont.



Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil

- This petition seems often puzzling to us. God would never lead us into temptation. We hardly need to ask God to do something God would never even consider in the first place. So why is it here?
- *It's because we get lost. Because we are led into temptation. Because we struggle. Because we often lead ourselves into temptation.*
- We shouldn't underestimate the allure, attractiveness and powerful deceptiveness of sin. If it was not attractive to us, we would not be tempted. We get seduced and ensnared by things we know to

be wrong, and because we often do the things we don't want to do, and wander from the path, **trusting ourselves, seeking our own kingdoms.**

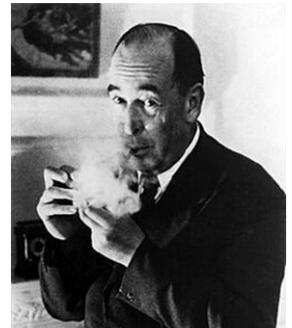
So, this petition means that, when I am tempted, when I confront what I know to be wrong, even evil itself, I am saying, 'Lord hold me and help me and be my guide. Your presence and this prayer you give me, are the inner compass, the inner satnav, which will save me and always pull me back on the right path.'

- We need to remember that evil is real.
- Jesus confronted evil in many forms. Jesus was tempted by the devil at the beginning of his ministry in the wilderness. He was tempted in the Garden of Gethsemane. He was betrayed, suffered injustice, rejected by religious leaders and was the victim of false allegations. He was the victim of a violent, political execution. He was mocked, humiliated. He took on the depths of darkness, of sin, of naked evil.

C.S. Lewis on evil

'Only those who try to resist temptation know how strong it is. ... We never find out the strength of the evil impulse inside us until we try to fight it: and Christ, because He was the only man who never yielded to temptation, is also the only man who knows to the full what temptation means—the only complete realist.'

'You can give the Devil too much or too little attention.'



- Yet the cross, seemingly the triumph of evil over good, was the vehicle for liberation, forgiveness and eternal life. Jesus shows us the way to triumph over sin and through death itself.

'Here is the liberating good news of the Christian faith. We do not need to face evil and death. Jesus has done it for us.'

- There is still evil in the world. But we face these trials, even find ourselves sharing in the suffering of Christ, knowing that Jesus has saved us and has already won the victory over darkness, sin and death.
- In alternative translations of the Lord's Prayer the words are translated as *'save us in the time of trial'*. We are asking that in those moments of wilful neglect and great temptation, we will be led back to the beauty of the gospel.
- In the cross and resurrection, Jesus meets us at the point of our deepest need, the place of the most profound human failing: the murder of an innocent man. *In his death, Jesus stands alongside all those other countless thousands and millions of innocent lives and grotesque human failings, and he leads us home.*
- *'Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff – they comfort me' (Ps 23.4).* These famous words from Psalm 23 offer the reassurance that God is with us – even in times of trial, even in darkness, even in death

itself. We make them our own as we say 'lead us not into temptation.'

'To pray "deliver us from evil" is to inhale the victory of the Cross.' T. Wright

"At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'" (Mt.27.46)

It is the climax of his sufferings,
it is his interior passion.
It is the tragedy of a God who cries out:

"My God, my God why have you forsaken me?".
The infinite mystery of the abyssal suffering
which Jesus experienced as a man.

It is the measure of his love for man.
He wanted to take upon Himself
the separation between God and man
and men from each other.

And He bridged the infinite gap of that separation.

All human sufferings are summarised in that particular
suffering of Jesus.

Those who are in anguish, who are lonely
or in a state of aridity,
the disappointed, the failed, the weak:
are they not all, in a way, similar to him?
Is he not the image of any painful division
among the members of a family?
Chiara Lubich – 'Jesus Forsaken'