

## **"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." (Mt 6:13)**

Exposition by John MacArthur ([Grace to You ministries](#))

"This is the kind of prayer that grows out of self-distrust. I know myself, I know I can be in situations that could be tests for my strengthening, but they become temptations and sin. I'm afraid of my weakness. I'm afraid of my inabilities. I'm afraid of the shallowness of my devotion. I'm afraid of the weakness of my love. I remember my past sins. I remember the pain of repentance. I remember the pain of confession. I know my flesh is weak. I know I live in a fallen world which is an ever-present threat to my virtue. I've seen it in my life in the past and I've seen it all around me.

"We are sinful and we are enveloped in an evil world. The things that threaten us are monumental physically...volcanoes, earthquakes, fires, floods, pestilence, accidents, disease, death; intellectually, we're blasted and bombarded by demonic wisdom. We see partial and unfair judgments, a black kind of justice that only touches the fringes of the light of truth. And it's that kind of perversion that careens on toward the chaos of relativistic destruction under the propulsion of self-love.

"We have in our culture and in our world, logic ruled by pride and logic dominated by lust so it gets twisted. The collision of human opinions is more like the collision of human deceptions. And you look at the emotional world, cares and silent griefs that scar the soul. They shrivel up the human spirit, envy stings, hate embitters greed, is like a canker. Affections are misplaced. Love is trampled and trashed. Confidences betrayed. The rich trample the poor, the poor try to dethrone the rich. Prisons and penitentiaries mark the emotional upheaval of the world and so does the proliferation of drugs. ...

"Man is completely out of harmony with God. And the machinery of man's moral nature is visibly out of gear. The wheels run out of sync. Evil tendencies dominate man. He may want to do right but he's pulled down to evil as if by some unceasing, unrelenting force of spiritual gravity drawing him into hell. ...

"We live in this dangerous world and, you know, we have to get real close to it because we can't come out of the world, we have to reach the world, right? I've got to go into those fortifications to smash them down, in the languages of 2 Corinthians 10 [*timid but brave*]. I've got to go into those dens of deception to snatch branches from the burning, in the words of Jude. I've got to do that. I have to live on that edge. So do you. And I want to do that in a way, Jude says, to make sure I keep my own garment unspotted because I'm getting so close to the stain, to the pollution. And this is what he's saying. We're in this thing. We live in a very dangerous environment, very dangerous. And we know our own weakness very, very well. Don't kid yourself. If you don't have a divine protector, you are in some serious trouble. And you have only one, and that's God who is our refuge.

"And in the general sense, this prayer just says, 'Lord, be my protector. Don't ever let me get into a situation that will devastate me. Don't ever let me get into a situation that will ruin me. Be my rock. Be my shelter. Be my refuge. Be my hiding place. Be my covering.' "

Thus we say with hearts full of need, spiritually inept to cope: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."