

Small Group – Lead Us Not – April 5

1. The last petition of the Lord's Prayer is the most controversial portion of the prayer. It implies that God can lead us into temptation. However unsettling the notion is, Jesus taught us to pray for God's leading and to affirm His sovereignty over all things, whether good or evil. What is unsettling about the mystery of God's absolute sovereignty over everything?

We are unsettled by the absence or by the lack of our control and comprehension when we are invited to relinquish over to God our will and our capacity to influence and manage the end results. It requires absolute trust and faith in God; and the uncertainty, confusion, doubt, skepticism, and pain that are felt when we cannot know why or how or when can be extremely uncomfortable and agonising. Everyone who has had a relationship with God in the Bible never had an easy or comfortable life. They all had to give up control, certainty, and complete comprehension. We are called to experience the same when we have a relationship with God.

2. We trust and affirm God's sovereign power when He leads us into our time of temptation. What is the comfort and assurance that we find about God's sovereign leading over all things?

The comfort and assurance is that God is good and powerful and sovereign, and it is perfect freedom to give ourselves to His good, powerful, and sovereign care. He will make sure everything will be alright because He can make sure everything will be alright and He plans to make everything alright. Consider the greatest tragedy of our world: the cross of Jesus. The most perfect being in existence suffered the most heinous tragedy of this life. But God made it all right. He transformed it in the most inconceivable way. And Jesus trusted in that. We are encouraged to trust as Jesus trusted God's leading even all the way to the cross.

3. We trust and affirm God's sustaining power when He leads us through temptation. How do the gifts of His Word in Holy Scripture, prayer, and community sustain us when we go through temptation?

The Bible contains everything necessary for our salvation and we are helped to accept and live out its principles and commands. Jesus said that His followers will be sanctified by God's truth; and God's Word is God's truth. We will do well to be immersed and bathed in His Words. Prayer makes things happen. We partner with God who has infinite power and resources to make things happen. We approach God to ask Him to do something we cannot. And we trust Him to do according to His good will and purposes, even in ways we cannot imagine. Community allows us to struggle and to fight and to resist together the waves of temptation. We can keep each other accountable, held up, held together, encouraged, forgiven and forgiving. The Christian life of holiness and purity is necessarily lived in communion with one another. Carry each other's burdens just as Jesus carries us to heaven.

4. We trust and affirm God's saving power when He promises to lead us out of temptation and evil. How can we be praying to God and working towards our world being delivered from evil?

We ask audaciously and imaginatively for God to save our world from present evils. And we live as we pray, just as Jesus lived as He prayed. We do not just pray in our closets, but we go out of our rooms to live, to breathe, to work, to fight, to resist, to care, and to love. Especially amidst the pandemic, we pray to be courageous to sacrifice willingly, safely, wisely, and lovingly for others beyond our own.