

TEMPTATION

And lead us not into temptation (Matthew 6:13, Luke 11:4, NIV)

God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control (2 Timothy 1:7, ESV)

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. (James 4:7-8, ESV)

I once thought that now that I had become a Christian sin was no longer an issue. The power of the Holy Spirit would automatically keep me from committing any sin ever again. Sadly, the reality was different. The possibility to sin presented itself in all kinds of subtle ways and I had to learn to consciously resist these temptations. I needed to recognize them for what they were and respond accordingly.

Even Jesus was tempted but successfully resisted the temptation to become rich, famous and powerful (Luke 4). If we want to put a stop to the power of sin in our lives, we need to learn (by trial and error!) to respond like He did. It involves a sharpened perception and a profound knowledge of the Word of God. That is what the Holy Spirit wants to give us so that we are empowered to choose good over evil (John 16:8-15).

This prayer will not keep all temptation from us but the Holy Spirit will enable us to exercise self-control, to resist the devil and find refuge and security in God. And we will be protected from temptations that are too great for us (1 Cor 10:13).

Prayer: Rejoice in the power God has put at your disposal. Ask the Lord to show you how to work with his Spirit to be successful in resisting temptation.