

The Lord's
Prayer

Sixth Petition

TEACHER GUIDE


Luther
House
Confirmation
Curriculum



And lead us not into temptation.

Essential Questions: What is temptation? From where/whom do attacks on God's promise come? How do we respond to these attacks?

Students will be able to:

- Define temptation.
- Explain what happens to God's promise of the forgiveness of sins whenever it is given.
- Identify sources of these attacks on the promise.
- Give examples of how our flesh, the world, and the devil each attack the promise.
- Connect our prayer that God "lead us not into temptation" with the certainty that Christ's promise cannot fail.

Lesson Overview: Read Mark 1:9-13: "In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my beloved Son, with you I am well pleased.' The Spirit immediately drove him into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan."

What happened right before Jesus was tossed out into the wilderness? He was baptized. In His Baptism, He had just received the promise of all promises from His Father: "You are my beloved Son, with you I am well pleased." But then, He was thrown straight to the wilderness to be tempted.

What is temptation? We usually think of temptation as wanting something you're not supposed to have. For instance: Mom made a tray of delicious cookies for church and told you not to touch them, but you *really* want to eat one. (After all, they smell so good!) In that case, we would understand temptation as wanting to eat a cookie anyway, even though you know you shouldn't. That's NOT what was happening with Jesus. Jesus was not being given two choices to see if He'd make the right one.

Temptation is not about making a choice. Instead, the promise Jesus was given by His Father in Baptism was being attacked. In other words, Satan was trying to get Jesus to doubt the words His Father had said. Temptation means an attack on faith in God's promise.

How quickly did the attack come? Immediately. That means there was no time between the promise being given and it being attacked. The attack came right away. The same is true for you. As soon as you were given the promise of the forgiveness of sins in Baptism, it came under attack.

So Jesus gives us the Sixth Petition of the Lord's Prayer: **Lead us not into temptation.**

1. Opening Prayer



Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

2. Essential Vocabulary



 **For Teachers: Words matter! Here are a few that you can explore briefly with your students:**

temptation - an attack on Christ's promise of the forgiveness of sins

devil - Satan; the father of all lies (John 8:44); the thief who comes only to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10)

world - the old creation where you live now, which is populated by sinners who are constantly comparing themselves to each other

flesh - the old sinful creature who is in bondage to sin, cannot free him/herself, and is still hanging around

deceive - to trick; to cause to believe something false

despair - to lose hope; to be left without faith

3. Video Lesson: The Lord's Prayer Sixth Petition



This video offers some words about what the Sixth Petition of the Lord's Prayer is all about. This video sets up the lesson that follows.

4. SING BOLDLY: Hymn Connection



 **There is a video that explores a hymn that can be sung during worship, and how the hymn connects to what we believe. The students will learn how this**


ties into the subject of our lesson, some background of the hymn, and the video will even teach us how to sing it boldly!

Teachers: At this point in the lesson, there will be an option to skip ahead to the “**Memory Work and Wrap Up**” portion. Alternatively, you may lead your group through all or part of “**Here I Hear & Speak**”. This section will equip you to lead group discussion and achieve the lesson’s learning goals. We advise that you explore this option with your small group (or as an individual). This guide has been created primarily to help you as you facilitate the “Hear I Hear & Speak” section. You will be learning about this part of Martin Luther’s Small Catechism, how it comes out of God’s Word in Scripture, and even how to equip our learners how to give that Word to others.


5. HERE I HEAR & SPEAK: Discussions and Activities



Group Activity: A PROMISE. You have a promise from God. When did you first receive that promise?

 **TEACHER NOTE:** When you were baptized. As we confess in the Small Catechism, Baptism brings about the forgiveness of sins, redeems from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe it, as the words and promise of God declare.


Who gave you this promise? *God gave you this promise.*


 **TEACHER NOTE:** The “I” in “I baptize you” is God Himself. And He puts His own name—His signature—on the promise: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.


But that promise is under attack. Temptation is the attack on God’s promise. Where does this attack come from? The Small Catechism points to three kinds of temptation: **the devil, the world, and our flesh.**

Let’s start with THE FLESH. How does our flesh attack the promise you’ve been given? First of all, what does “flesh” mean anyway? Read Psalm 51:3-6 and Romans 3:10-18 to find out.

- Psalm 51 is a psalm of David. David was chosen and favored by God. But when David looked at himself, what did he see?

 **TEACHER NOTE:** “My sin is ever before me.” David was a sinner. In this case, David had committed adultery with a woman named Bathsheba who was married to another man, and then David had Bathsheba’s husband killed to cover up his crime. And not only did David sin, but he was conceived and born in sin. He was a sinner even before he was born! (So were you!)

- According to Romans 3:10-18, who is righteous?  None. No, not one.
- What does this tell you about yourself?


 **TEACHER NOTE:** You are not righteous in and of yourself. You are a sinner. No one does good, not even one. That includes you.

Even though you've been given Christ's promise that He forgives your sin, and by faith in that promise you're completely justified before God, you notice that you haven't stopped sinning! We see and feel that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. That's the flesh—the old sinful you who is still hanging around (and will be until you die).

Next, we have THE WORLD. How does the world attack the promise you've been given?

We live in a world populated by sinners (us included!) who are always comparing ourselves to each other. This is nothing new, but this comparison sure seems much easier today than ever before. Using technology, we can *constantly* compare ourselves to others. We can seek feedback for everything we say and do in the form of views and likes, and instantly see how we stack up against others. We check our devices constantly for fear of missing an event or a post. It can become an obsession. This has become so common that in 2004 the word FOMO was coined to describe it, and in 2016 it was added to Merriam-Webster's dictionary. FOMO, or "fear of missing out," is defined as the "fear of not being included in something that others are experiencing," and it is particularly associated with our use of social media.

- **How is this an attack on God's promise?**

 **TEACHER NOTE:** Advertisers make huge profits by manipulating our desire not to fall behind or be left out. When we are comparing ourselves to others, we are trusting the things we observe rather than the promises we've heard. We find ourselves looking for our identity in what we do and other people's responses. This leaves us completely uncertain of where we stand not only with other people but also with God. We are constantly having to check to see how we measure up, and it leaves us unsure and exhausted. This is an attack on faith.

As Luther observed 500 years ago, this "drives us to anger and impatience." "For no one is willing to be the least, but everyone wants to sit on top and be observed by all." How much more does this seem true today!


Finally, we have THE DEVIL. How does the devil attack the promise you've been given?

The promise Christ gives you is the forgiveness of sin. And because Christ is the one who gives you this promise, it's a sure thing. Therefore, the only way the devil can attack the promise is with a lie. Jesus calls the devil "the father of all lies" (John 8:44). Satan is kind of a one-trick pony. All he can do is try to deceive or trick you into believing his lies instead of Christ's words. Just as he did in the garden with Eve and Adam, the devil will try to drive a wedge between you and faith. So his lies still sound like they did in the Garden of Eden: "Did God *really* say?" In other words, the devil will lie and say the promise is not really for you.

And you'll notice that the devil's voice often comes from places you don't expect, like other people's mouths, or even in your own thoughts. That's why it's important to recognize these lies and where they come from so you'll know them when you hear them.


The lie comes in a couple of different forms. It will sound like this: "You don't need the forgiveness of sins. You're good enough without it."

- Have you ever heard this kind of lie before? When/where?

 **TEACHER NOTE:** It's pretty easy to convince us sinners that we're better than most other people—or that your sin isn't really that bad (or even that your sin isn't sin at all). That's one of the devil's favorite tricks. But when he convinces you that you don't need forgiveness, forgiveness doesn't do you any good. Before you can hear that your sins are forgiven, first you have to know you're a sinner!

The devil will also point to the fact that, even though you're baptized, you're still a sinner, or to bad things that happen in your life, and say, "This promise isn't enough." He will rob you of your faith by convincing you that the promise depends on something *you* can do or observe.

- Have you ever heard this kind of lie before? When/where?

 **TEACHER NOTE:** This is another one of the devil's favorite tricks. People will say things like, "Forgiveness is fine. But what really matters is what you do after you're forgiven." Notice what that's doing: it calls God's promise into question by saying it's only true if you respond a certain way or if you can observe a sign. It turns you back to the uncertainty and despair of constantly comparing yourself. This is an attack on faith in God's promise.

As Luther writes, "We are far too weak against the devil and all his might and forces arrayed against us, trying to trample us underfoot." We cannot withstand or overcome the attacks of the devil, the world, and our flesh. Against these enemies, we ourselves would lose every time. **So, what do we do?**

First, expect the attack. As long as we remain in this world, the attacks will come. All of us who are given Christ's promise will be attacked. And the attack will come "immediately," as soon as the promise is given, just as it did with Jesus after His baptism. Not only that, but, as Luther writes, "When one attack ceases, new ones always arise."

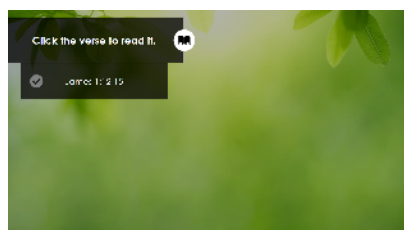
But what do we do when the attack comes? Pray!

And who commands us to pray? God does. He knows that, in our sin and weakness, we expect far too little of prayer. So He not only commands us to pray but also gives us His own name to call on and the words to use: "Father, lead us not into temptation. Do not let me fall because of this attack."

And God *does not deceive you*. He cannot lie. Even when the only thing we see and feel is the attack, the FOMO, and the anxiety, God's eternal promise that is yours in Baptism *cannot fail*. He has put His own signature on it: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. So we pray, knowing that God will do what He said. Every time. This is most certainly true.



In the Word: Let's see how Scripture passages relate to what we've discussed so far!




- Read: James 1:12-15


- What does it mean to be blessed?

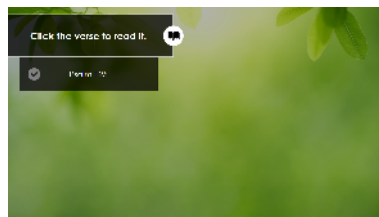
 **TEACHER NOTE:** To be blessed is to be given a promise by God.

- What does steadfast mean?  **TEACHER NOTE:** It means “unchanging” or “unmoving”.
- Who remains steadfast under trial?

 **TEACHER NOTE:** A sailing ship uses an anchor to remain in place. When winds and waves come, the thing that determines whether or not the ship will move is the anchor, not the ship itself. When the anchor holds fast, the ship remains unmoved. You remain steadfast because you have been given Christ’s unchanging and unbreakable promise of the forgiveness of your sin, “We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor for the soul.” (Hebrews 6:19)

- Verse 13 says “God Himself tempts no one.” Luther echoes this verse in the Small Catechism. So, is God putting a set of choices in front of you and then waiting to see if you’ll choose the right one?


 **TEACHER NOTE:** No. God tempts no one. Temptation is not about making a choice. God isn’t testing you to see how strong your faith is—He already knows what kind of a sinner you are! What is God doing then? He is teaching you what a promise is. “God tempts no one” means that He will never allow His promise to fail. It can’t fail—even when the only things you can see and feel are your sin and the lies of the devil and the world. God is showing you that even though the promise will be constantly attacked, His promise will never fail.

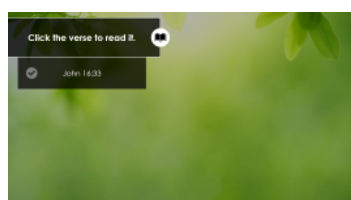


- Read: Psalm 125
- Who does the psalm say is like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever?

 **TEACHER NOTE:** Those who trust in the LORD.


- When your heart is upright, what is your faith clinging to for righteousness?


 **TEACHER NOTE:** Faith is trust. Without a promise from Jesus Christ, our trust always ends up in the wrong things. Christ’s promise is that He has taken away your crooked ways—your trust in the wrong things—and was crucified and resurrected to give you the promise of His forgiveness. His promise cannot be moved, but abides forever. Now, your trust has something righteous to cling to! An upright heart is clinging to Jesus Christ, and nothing else, for your righteousness.




- Read: John 16:33


- Jesus was speaking to His disciples. He had just told them that they were about to scatter and abandon Him to save themselves. Does that change the way you hear, “I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace”? How so?

 **TEACHER NOTE:** When Jesus comes, He doesn't come to get revenge against the ones who scatter and abandon Him, but to have mercy. He gives His words to you that in Him you may have peace.

- What does Jesus say you will have in the world?  **TEACHER NOTE:** Tribulation.
- What is tribulation?

 **TEACHER NOTE:** Tribulation is trouble and suffering. As long as you are in this world, the promise will be attacked.

- What unbreakable promise does Jesus give here?

 **TEACHER NOTE:** “Take heart, I have overcome the world.” Jesus has already overcome the world, the devil, and your sin. When you see and feel the attacks on faith in this world, you have the certain promise that they have already been defeated, for you!

6. MEMORY WORK



The words in Luther's Small Catechism are worth memorizing. In this lesson, there could be tools, including songs, that will equip students to find some success.

- *The Sixth Petition:* And lead us not into temptation.
- *What does this mean?* It is true that God tempts no one, but we ask in this prayer that God would preserve us and keep us, so that the devil, the world, and our flesh may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, or other great shame and vice, and that, although we may be attacked by them, we may finally prevail and gain the victory.

7. LEARNING CHECK



- Which is the best definition of *temptation*?
 - Having to decide between two alternatives.
 - Wanting to eat a delicious cookie.
 - **The attack on Christ's promise of the forgiveness of sins.**
 - None of the above.



- What happens to God's promise of the forgiveness of sin whenever it is given?
 - You have to choose whether to accept it or not.
 - **It immediately comes under attack.**
 - As soon as you get the promise, you become a better person.

- In the Small Catechism, Martin Luther identifies three kinds of temptation. What are they?
 - physical, spiritual, and emotional
 - **the devil, the world, and our flesh**
 - sloth, envy, and pride



- **True** or False? As long as you are in this world, you will continue to sin.



- What is the result of our constantly comparing ourselves to others?
 - It helps us become more righteous.
 - **It leaves us unsure of where we stand before others and before God.**
 - It improves our emotional health.



- The devil will attack Christ's promise with a lie that says:
 - **The promise is not really for you.**
 - **You don't need forgiveness. You're already good enough.**
 - **The promise depends on something you do.**



- True or **False**? God is giving you a series of choices to make and then waiting to see if you'll choose correctly.



- We pray "Lead us not into temptation" because...
 - **God's promise cannot fail.**
 - **Jesus teaches us to pray this way.**
 - **our faith in God's promise has come under attack.**

8. WRAP UP

Closing Prayer & Benediction



- God our Father, You do not leave us at the mercy of the devil, the world, or our flesh. Instead, You preserve and keep us by giving us the unfailing promise of Your mercy for Christ's sake. Though our faith is attacked, do let us not be deceived; instead, hold us secure in Your promise that Christ has already overcome our enemies for us. In His name we pray. Amen.

It is good practice to give a blessing to each individual student before they leave you! (You might also select one of them to give this spoken benediction to you.) Our Lord uses baptized believers to give this, God's message, to one another. Here is a Benediction that you could use this week:

- (Name), our almighty God hold you steadfast in His unfailing promise. Amen.



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