

**29<sup>th</sup> September 2024 – Morning Service**  
**Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil**  
**Rev Andrew Roberts**

*Please note this service is part of series of services presently running at Kinver. Although it has been developed for that series, I hope it will be helpful across the Circuit.*

**A Gathering Prayer<sup>1</sup>**

Loving God, you open the way for us to hear your voice and to do your will. Give us your strength, your courage, your presence, so that we may respond in word and deed and be your people for your purposes, through Jesus our Lord who gave his all for us. **Amen.**

**StF 84 – Praise the Lord his glories show**

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| 1) Praise the Lord, his glories show, Alleluia!<br>Saints within his courts below, Alleluia!<br>Angels round his throne above, Alleluia!<br>All that see and share his love. Alleluia!      | 3) Praise the Lord, his mercies trace; Alleluia!<br>Praise his providence and grace, Alleluia!<br>All that he for us has done, Alleluia!<br>All he sends us through his Son. Alleluia!        |
| 2) Earth to heaven, and heaven to earth, Alleluia!<br>Tell his wonders, sing his worth; Alleluia!<br>Age to age and shore to shore, Alleluia!<br>Praise him, praise him evermore! Alleluia! | 4) Strings and voices, hands and hearts, Alleluia!<br>In the concert play your parts; Alleluia!<br>All that breathe, your Lord adore, Alleluia!<br>Praise him, praise him evermore! Alleluia! |

*Henry Francis Lyte*

**Prayer of Adoration<sup>2</sup>**

Give us, O God, a vision of your glory, that we may worship you in spirit and in truth, and offer the praise of glad and thankful hearts; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Prayer of Confession<sup>3</sup>**

Let us call to mind our sins. Lord Jesus, you came into the world to save sinners:

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

We have brought sorrow and hurt to you, to others and to ourselves:

Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

You give yourself to heal and renew us, and to bring us strength:

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and keep us in life eternal. **Amen.**

**StF 94 – To God be the glory**

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| 1) To God be the glory, great things he has done!<br>So loved he the world that he gave us his Son,<br>Who yielded his life in atonement for sin,<br>And opened the life-gate that all may go in:  | 2) O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,<br>To every believer the promise of God!<br>And every offender who truly believes,<br>That moment from Jesus a pardon receives:                               |
| Ch) <i>Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!</i><br><i>Let the earth hear his voice!</i><br><i>Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!</i><br><i>Let the people rejoice!</i><br><i>O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son;</i><br><i>And give him the glory - great things he has done!</i> | 3) Great things he has taught us, great things<br>he has done,<br>And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;<br>But purer, and higher, and greater will be<br>Our wonder, our rapture, when Jesus we see: |

*Frances Jane van Alstyne*

## The Lord's 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, the power, and the glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. **Amen.**

## StF 527 – Pray for a world

- 1) Pray for a world where every child  
Finds welcome in a sheltered place,  
Where love is tender, undefiled,  
And firmness intertwines with grace.
- 2) Pray for a world where passion's fire  
Burns not in force or careless lust,  
Where God's good gift of deep desire  
Is safe in arms of faith and trust.
- 3) Pray for a nation just and fair  
That seeks the welfare of us all,  
Where leaders guide with prudent care  
And nurture life for great and small.
- 4) Pray for a world where all have voice  
And none will batter, rape, abuse.  
Till then, may all have rightful choice  
And pray for wisdom as they choose.

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## Prayers of Intercession<sup>3</sup>

God of love, we pray for the life of your Church throughout the world . . . May every congregation be a community of love and every Christian a witness to your grace. May we be a living fellowship in your Spirit and serve our neighbourhood.

Your kingdom come. **Your will be done.**

God of mercy, we pray for the life of the world . . . and for those who exercise power . . . Show us how to live as members of the human family; to stand against evil to reject the ways of war; to bear each other's burdens and to work together for justice and peace.

Your kingdom come. **Your will be done.**

We pray for all those who struggle with temptations at this time. May they be granted courage, strength and the resources they need to resist all that would damage them and others.

Your kingdom come. **Your will be done.**

God of compassion, we pray for those who are ill or anxious at home or in hospital . . . We pray for those whose lives are filled with fear and despair . . . Draw near with your saving love and bring healing and hope.

Your kingdom come. **Your will be done.**

God of glory, we rejoice in the communion of saints; we remember all who have faithfully lived and all who have died in Christian hope, especially . . . Help us to follow their example and bring us with them into the fullness of your eternal joy.

Your kingdom come. **Your will be done. Amen.**

## StF 518 – Father hear the prayer we offer

- 1) Father, hear the prayer we offer:  
Not for ease that prayer shall be,  
But for strength that we may ever  
Live our lives courageously.
- 2) Not for ever in green pastures  
Do we ask our way to be;  
But the steep and rugged pathway  
May we tread rejoicingly.
- 3) Not for ever by still waters  
Would we idly rest and stay;  
But would strike the living fountains  
From the rocks along our way.
- 4) Be our strength in hours of weakness,  
In our wanderings be our guide;  
Through endeavour, failure, danger,  
Father, be there at our side.

*Love Maria Willis*

## Reading: Matthew 6:9-13

‘This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”’

## Reading: Romans 7:1-25a

Do you not know, brothers and sisters – for I am speaking to those who know the law – that the law has authority over someone only as long as that person lives? For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law that binds her to him. So then, if she has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man. So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. For when we were in the realm of the flesh, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in us, so that we bore fruit for death. But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

What shall we say, then? Is the law sinful? Certainly not! Nevertheless, I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, ‘You shall not covet.’ But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of coveting. For apart from the law, sin was dead. Once I was alive apart from the law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good. Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! Nevertheless, in order that sin might be recognised as sin, it used what is good to bring about my death, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do – this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. So I find this law at work: although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

## Sermon

I recently joined the statins club. A routine blood test showed my cholesterol level to be fractionally over the reading that says go away and don't worry. The nurse suggested trying a statin and following a helpful chat with the pharmacist I am now taking the tablets. The pharmacist also told me how bad crisps are when it comes to cholesterol and although I have never eaten many of them, I am now eating even fewer. Last week we were on holiday and whilst away we visited several of the dens of temptation that are tea and coffee shops with their alluring displays of cakes and cream scones. I will confess to succumbing to one scone but it was genuinely interesting and surprising to feel the power of the temptation to be seduced by the goodies on offer. And that got me thinking about today's text; Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

As CS Lewis in the Screwtape letters makes clear there are two equal and opposite dangers when it comes to thinking about matters such as temptation and evil. The first is that we trivialise them or assume they are relics of medieval superstition. The second is that we become paranoid about them ascribing every sneeze or piece of burnt toast to some malevolent presence. It is not surprising that Jesus includes both temptation and evil in his model prayer. He knew personally the reality and power of both. From the wilderness to the cross, temptation was powerfully present. '*Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God*' (Matthew 27:40) was the temptation at Calvary. Jesus did not escape temptation. He overcame temptation. And Jesus stands with us to provide the power to do the same.

His great servant and apostle Paul also knew the reality and power of temptation. This is so very clear in the visceral descriptions of his struggles in Romans 7.

*I do not do the good things I want to do, but I do the bad things I do not want to do.* (Romans 7:19).

The chapter climaxes with cries of despair and celebration. *What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!* (24-25). These personal cries of Paul are also the universal cries of humanity. All of us face temptations of one sort or another. All of us will have known times when we have done the wrong not the right thing. We may even have known, or perhaps know right now, the sense of despair that was evident in Paul. But here is the good news. Through Jesus Christ our Lord we have known and can know again the delivering power of God.

One person who can testify to that is a lady called Trudy Makepeace. In her truly inspiring book ***Abused Addicted Free*** she courageously tells her story and the depths she plumbed through a series of dangerous addictions – including an addiction to heroin - and abusive relationships – including those she succumbed to in order to fund her drug addictions. Jesus saved her, healed her. He also gave her a new perspective. She writes:

*Since I came to know Jesus, my heart has always been to make Him known to anyone and everyone. However, I have always been particularly drawn to the most down trodden and broken, perhaps because of my own story. I have seen the evidence and power of the word of God worked out in my life. If he can do it for me and countless others, He can do it for you. There is no one beyond the reach of his mercy, love, forgiveness and healing. My life is evidence of the fact that God will take the good, the bad and the ugly, and if you trust Him, He will make something beautiful out of it all. As we allow God to work in us and heal us, He takes our brokenness and turns it onto a blessing by using those things in our lives to bless and help others.* (Trudy Makepeace *Abused Addicted Free*. Malcolm Down Publishing p226  
<https://www.trudymakepeace.com>)

Trudy knows how real and powerful temptation and evil can be. She also knows how real and powerful prayer can be and the value of our words from the Lord's Prayer *Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.*

As I mentioned earlier there is a risk that we laugh off the power of temptation quoting Oscar Wilde's famous saying '*I can resist everything except temptation*' or reject the idea of evil as some sort of medieval superstition. But just a few moments browsing a news website reveals the folly of such thinking. As I type the BBC website is full of details of the evil behaviour of Al Fayed and the ongoing evils of war.

Our Lord's Prayer study guide reminds us that in all probability every moment of every day, someone, somewhere, will be praying the Lord's Prayer. That person maybe someone struggling with their own sexual fantasies or someone who is being abused by another. That person may also be a Christian in Gaza or Ukraine praying that they may be delivered from the evil of war. This prayer matters.

As we have noted in our series at Kinver, Jesus gave us the Lord's Prayer in the third person. So, we pray to Our Father, ask forgiveness for our sins and pray that we may be delivered from temptation and evil. So, the prayer is intercessional as well as personal. We pray it for others as well as ourselves. For the victims of sexual violence, for those in Ukraine and the Middle East, for those addicted to drugs, alcohol or gambling. And the next time we ourselves are struggling with temptation just pause and be aware that someone somewhere is praying that we might not succumb to that temptation.

We have touched on some deep matters today and please if these are difficult for you do find someone to share with you. And please keep praying the prayer Jesus has given us that with St Paul we may be able to say '*Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!* May it be so. Amen.

### StF 351 – In Christ Alone

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| 1) In Christ alone my hope is found,<br>He is my light, my strength, my song;<br>This Cornerstone, this solid Ground,<br>Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.<br>What heights of love, what depths of peace,<br>When fears are stilled, when strivings cease!<br>My Comforter, my All in All,<br>Here in the love of Christ I stand. | 3) There in the ground His body lay,<br>Light of the world by darkness slain:<br>Then bursting forth in glorious Day<br>Up from the grave He rose again!<br>And as He stands in victory<br>Sin's curse has lost its grip on me,<br>For I am His and He is mine-<br>Bought with the precious blood of Christ.    |
| 2) In Christ alone! who took on flesh,<br>Fullness of God in helpless babe!<br>The gift of love and righteousness,<br>Scorned by the ones He came to save:<br>Till on that cross as Jesus died,<br>The word of God was satisfied -<br>For every sin on Him was laid;<br>Here in the death of Christ I live.                                  | 4) No guilt in life, no fear in death,<br>This is the power of Christ in me;<br>From life's first cry to final breath,<br>Jesus commands my destiny.<br>No power of hell, no scheme of man,<br>Can ever pluck me from His hand;<br>Till He returns or calls me home,<br>Here in the power of Christ I'll stand! |

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### Closing Prayer<sup>4</sup>

Eternal light, shine into our hearts; eternal goodness, deliver us from evil;  
eternal power, be our support; eternal wisdom, scatter the darkness of our ignorance;  
eternal pity, have mercy upon us;  
that with all of our heart and mind and soul and strength we may seek your face and be brought by your infinite mercy to your holy presence; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

<sup>1</sup> From Roots for Worship

<sup>2</sup> From the Methodist Worship Book

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from the Methodist Worship Book

<sup>4</sup> A prayer of Alcuin of York