

COMMON GRACE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

LENT 2023



Today's Lent reflection is from Aboriginal Christian Leader and Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi woman, Aunty Sue Hodges, speaking on 'Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil'.

Hello there everyone. I'm Sue Hodges and I'm a Wiradjuri woman on my mother's side and Kamilaroi background as well from my father's side, I'm the mother of four and the grandmother of 10, and I work for the Salvation Army as part of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ministry team. I cover New South Wales, ACT and I've also been a part of Kairos Prison Ministry for over 10 years now. I support women by taking them away on camps to rejuvenate them and let them know that there are other women out there who go through the same issues. I also have been in juvenile justice centres to minister to the young folk about the Lord and a part of supporting men and women's groups who go in to talk about Jesus and let them know that Jesus loves them.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil

The key word that stands out for me is temptation. Now, the biblical meaning of temptation is a trial in which a man has a free choice of being faithful or unfaithful to God. You know, Satan encouraged Jesus to deviate from the plan of His Father by misusing His authority and the privileges that God had given Him. Jesus used those holy scriptures to resist all such temptation. Temptation is all around us.

We need to learn what the Bible has to say about temptation.

We need to just keep leaning into Jesus. Just keep remembering that He's in control.

Jesus said to them, pray that you will not fall into temptation. Now, that can come out in many forms.

It might be a time to think evil of other people. It might be a time to think about the wrongs that other people have done to us. That's temptation. Just take it to Jesus. He says, forgive us our sins for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation. Forgive us our sins for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. That can be quite hard as a human being. There are always those things that we hang on to that makes it really tough for us to forgive.

I've lived through so many things in Australia, you know, during my short life, through the assimilation policy, through the integration policy, through the self-determination policy. Now we are looking at the future and I think about how some of my family were removed from our family. I think about how some of my mob were locked up and put into jail. I think about how police have treated my aunts and uncles and my cousins. Unfortunately, I have to forgive them. That temptation of wanting to hang onto that anger, it just impacts on me too. So, I have to hand it over to God. And I asked you to do that. Hand it over to God so that you will be free. You will feel a sense of loss and hurt, yes, but that anger will be taken and you can put that on the cross. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

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This holiday that's coming up during Easter, if you are feeling hurt, if you are feeling like you have people that you don't want to forgive, just remember that Jesus has been tempted. Jesus overcame those temptations. He died on the Cross. And his last words were, "Forgive them for they not know what they have done". Folks, lead us not into temptation. Deliver us from evil. Deliver us from 'stinking thinking'. Deliver us from being in situations where we get angry. Deliver us from situations where we hang on to all of this hurt and grief and loss. It's always tough when it comes to forgiveness. Giving over to God is something that we all should learn to do.

I just pray that we can remember the Lord's prayer. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," because we just need to know that God is there and God will help us through. And if we can say no to the temptation, then we will live a better, healthier life. Because it's all that grief that keeps us down and keeps us sick.