

Read Matthew Chapter 6 verses 5-15.

The New Testament affirms that at the cross Jesus disarmed and triumphed over the devil, and all the 'principalities and powers' at his command. Perhaps the most important New Testament passage in which the victory of Christ is set out is in Colossians 2:13-15.

Read Colossians 2:13-15

- *What are your thoughts when considering the fact that the devil has been defeated, but not yet eliminated? How do you deal with this tension?*
- *We are encouraged in Ephesian's Chapter 6 verses 10-17 to put on the full armour of God. Is this something you take seriously?*
- *How do you respond to the idea that Satan's activity is more than a general, overarching non-personal influence of evil? How do you react to the idea that this evil is directed towards individuals and churches?*

Lead us not into temptation

- *In Matthew Chapter 26 verse 41, the disciples are encouraged to watch and pray so they will not fall into temptation. Would you say that you are vigilant in this regard? Consider 1 Peter Chapter 5 verse 8 in relation to this question.*
- *How do you reconcile the fact that our Lord uses trials and testing to procure perseverance in our faith (James Chapter 1 verses 2-3) with the prayer 'lead us not into temptation'?*

Deliver us from the evil one

- Revelation 12:9 identifies Satan as the deceiver of the whole world. How do you respond to this idea?
- We know that Christ Jesus has defeated Satan, and will one day destroy him altogether. John Stott argues that we are to confront Satan's continuing malicious activity by resisting him, standing firm in the faith. He quotes James Chapter 4 verse 7 - 'resist the devil and he will flee from you. How do you react to this?
- Remember that in our own strength we are weak, and that it is in the name of Jesus that we are strong. Is this something that you have grasped?
- Remember that our enduring attention is to be to our Lord, not the enemy. Do you think you have the balance right?
- Our ultimate calling is to be an uncompromising witness for Christ? How do you respond to this idea?

Pray for one another, remembering that our enduring attention is to be to the Lord, whilst remembering we need to be vigilant with regards to the enemy's activities. Remember that Christ has the victory, and that he is to be our primary focus - keep the balance right!!