

Three Enemies

Read [Matthew 6:9-13](#)

DIGGING DEEPER....

Let's dig a little deeper now and see what some other Bible passages have to say about being delivered through prayer. We'll look at what the Scriptures say, then consider how it applies to our personal lives.

Three Enemies (from [Galatians 5:16–17](#), [19–21](#); [James 4:4](#); [1 Peter 5:8](#))

Galatians 5:16-17 (NASB)

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

¹⁷ For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

Galatians 5:19-21 (NASB)

¹⁹ Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,

²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,

²¹ envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

James 4:4 (NASB)

⁴ You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

1 Peter 5:8 (NASB)

⁸ Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

Do you remember the Falklands Islands War of 1982? Just a couple of weeks ago I was traveling back on a United Airlines flight from the country of Honduras where I was ministering the Word of God. I picked up the airline magazine in the back pocket of seat that was in front of me and began to read the following story about the Falklands Islands War of 1982. I will not share the entire story with you but only a small portion that caught my attention.

Around 1980 a retired couple searched the globe for an out-of-the-way place to get away from it all, to spend their Golden Years in peace. They picked the Falkland Islands, a group of islands off of the southern tip of South America—a remote place most people had never heard of.

Shortly after their arrival, however, Argentina invaded the islands. It seems they disputed the United Kingdom's claim to them, a claim that stretches back to the days of England's empire. Well, the United Kingdom did not take kindly to the seizure of their property, never mind that it was property thousands of miles away, in another hemisphere, and toward the bottom of the world. They sent their own troops, ships, and planes to take it back. And thus began the Falkland Islands War, which lasted a couple of months, until Argentine forces surrendered in June 1982.

This retired couple, looking for a peaceful, out-of-the-way place in the world, found themselves in the middle of a war.

You can't get away from conflict in this world. Ever since the fall of the human being into sin, we have lived in the middle of a spiritual battlefield, a battlefield that often puts us in need of deliverance through prayer. That is why it is good to know that God has promised to "*deliver us*" if we ask.

Matthew 6:13 (NASB)

¹³ 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]'

The Bible identifies three enemies that bring conflict into our life, and often cause us to need deliverance through prayer. **The first enemy is referred to as the "flesh":**

Galatians 5:16-17 (NASB)

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

¹⁷ For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

Notice the "*flesh*" is "*in opposition to*" the Spirit. It is in opposition to God's work in our life. When the Bible refers to the flesh negatively like this, as our enemy, it is not to say that there is anything inherently wrong with our physical body—after all, God designed it for us. It is referring to the natural desires—housed in our physical body—that are often in conflict with God's will: lusts, passions, weaknesses, bad habits, and so on.

The Bible lists some examples of the sins of the flesh:

Galatians 5:19-21 (NASB)

¹⁹ Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,

²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,

²¹ envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

The flesh brings conflict into our life through our weakness to these various sins. When we give into them, they land us in various kinds of trouble.

For example I remember a story that was shared outside of The Home Depot store a number of years ago, there was a foreman in a construction company who was always passed over for promotion. He was hardworking, knowledgeable, but he never got promoted. A younger employee asked him about this one day, “Why don’t they ever promote you? You’re one of the best workers here.”

“Well,” the foreman said, “years ago I had an argument with the supervisor ... and I won.”

This foreman failed to advance because he gave into his temper one day. A sin of the flesh (see “*outbursts of anger*,” [verse 20](#)) landed him in trouble.

Galatians 5:19-21 (NASB)

²⁰ **idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,**

What sin of the flesh has landed you into the most trouble in your life?