

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.

The second enemy that brings conflict into our life is the “world”:

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.”

The Bible says the “*world*” is not friendly to God’s purposes, to God’s will for our life. When the Bible refers to the world negatively like this, as our enemy, it is not referring to the people of the world. We know that God loves them, as Jesus said: “*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him*

shall not perish but have eternal life” ([John 3:16](#)). The Bible is referring to the *ways* of the world, which so often tend to be in opposition to God’s ways.

The main way the world brings conflict into our life is through the pressure to conform to its, and the crowd’s, ways rather than to God’s Word. It is hard to go against the flow.

Even Peter, the lead apostle, fell prey to the influence of the crowd. When Jesus was arrested the night before his crucifixion, Peter bravely followed him to his first trial before the high priest. I believe he had every intention of standing by his Savior’s side that night. He had earlier claimed that he would die for him, and had pulled a sword to protect him when the soldiers came to arrest him. But that was before he felt the pressure of the crowd:

Luke 22:55 (NASB)

⁵⁵“After they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter was sitting among them.”

Notice that “*Peter sat down with them*”—“*them*” being the disbelieving crowd. He took a seat with the group that was against Jesus. Watch what happens next:

Luke 22:56-62 (NASB)

⁵⁶ And a servant-girl, seeing him as he sat in the firelight and looking intently at him, said, “This man was with Him too.”

⁵⁷ But he denied *it*, saying, “Woman, I do not know Him.”

⁵⁸ little later, another saw him and said, “You are *one of them* too!” But Peter said, “Man, I am not!”

⁵⁹ After about an hour had passed, another man *began* to insist, saying, “Certainly this man also was with Him, for he is a Galilean too.”

⁶⁰ But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are talking about.” Immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed.

⁶¹ The Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, “Before a rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times.”

⁶² And he went out and wept bitterly.

The pressure to conform to the crowd was too much for Peter. He loved his Lord with all his heart, but found himself denying him in the hour of his greatest need. It is hard indeed to go against the flow. Today the church is filled with a lot of Peters.

Christian author Max Lucado tells about the time he had to catch an early flight. He was really tired and dozed off while waiting for the plane. Suddenly he was roused from his sleep by the noise of a crowd moving toward the boarding ramp. He hurriedly gathered his belongings and joined them. When he took his seat on the plane, he slipped into another nap.

Sometime later he awakened to the bright morning sun shining through the window. He heard the flight attendant announce their estimated time of arrival in Houston. The problem was, he was supposed to be going to Denver! Awakening in the terminal and

seeing the crowd boarding the plane, he had simply followed along—and boarded the wrong plane.

It is hard to go against the flow. That's why the Bible warns us in **1 Corinthians 15:33**: **“Do not be deceived: “Bad company corrupts good morals.”**

That's why we need to spend a healthy amount of time around other Christians at church: **“Not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”** ([Hebrews 10:25](#)).

Where are you feeling pressure to conform to the world's ways?