

## Introduction: What is temptation?

- Root of word we translate "temptation" is in "testing"
  - only in last 300 years has it had such a purely negative connotation
  - testing to prove or reveal the reality and heart of a person
  - "win your spurs" - a test, but the intention was that the novice succeed and become a knight
  - aim of examinations is success, to prove how much you've learned, not to trip people up
- Temptation does not merely comprise the "evangelical classics" (or hangups!) of sex and money and power
  - but every little point where we have the choice to put God first or not
  - trivial examples - to pray for someone, to smile, to forgive, to welcome....

## An invitation to laziness?

- Are we asking to "get out of" something that here and elsewhere Scripture makes clear will come?
  - eg here in Hebrews 4
  - Jesus himself being tempted - and that at the point where he is most explicitly identifying himself and experiencing our human condition
  - so is asking to get out of temptation a sign of spiritual laziness?

## A recognition of helplessness

- Draw car/road crossing analogy
  - don't need to cross the road at the most dangerous point... me nearly getting knocked down in Edinburgh...
  - don't test me beyond my abilities
- This prayer is me saying "I can't pass the test of living a for Jesus Christ, of living a holy live, proving his first place in my heart without his help!"

## An appeal for relationship

- And in the recognising that helplessness, the implication is that we are looking for relationship with God in the living of our life
  - satisfied by the context in the midst of the Lord's prayer, "Our Father...."
  - desiring that God comes and walks with us, relating to us, carrying us, guiding us through the testing times
  - not just doing it for us - though there may be times when God does carry us through stuff we look back and see we could never have managed - but strengthening us by his Holy Spirit dwelling and working within us