

3/23/25 SALT CO
The Sixth Window: “Lead us not into temptation...”
The Window on Courage

WELCOME TO THE SALT CO!

Welcome those who are joining us online.

This is the HUB of Seasoned Adult Ministry. For anyone new...by SEASONED ADULTS we mean:

SEASONED AS IN...

Chronologically-- we've lived a lot of seasons of life

BUT more importantly-

Spiritually--- ...like when sodium and chlorine combined are transformed through a visible chemical reaction to make SALT... by the grace of God, when we receive Christ into our lives, we become like THIS [gesture: one hand—two hands—joined together]

JESUS CALLS US THE SALT OF THE EARTH.

And this is the SALT CO (where we pull off the road to gather, AND share stories about how to faithfully navigate the ever-changing terrain on Route 60+; and Route 60++...and +++...

A place where we:

Re-fresh

Re-fuel

And sometimes even...*Re-tool*

When Suzanne and I were on the road a while back we came across this card that says it well what we do for each other...

We're accepting Jesus' invitation to come see what He sees through the Seven Windows in His House of Prayer, what we call "The Lord's Prayer".

Because we want to see what He sees, think His thoughts. It's how we can live and love like Him.

First Window opens when we pray “***Our Father in heaven...***” God our Father is full of glad-to-be-together JOY!

Second Window opens as we pray, “***Hallowed be Your name...***” When we hallow who God is we are like mirrors reflecting His glory out into a searching world, and His holiness that shines is... beautiful!

The third window opens when we pray for His kingdom coming, His will being done on earth as in heaven, right where we live! This is the window on new creation!

We opened the fourth window praying for our daily bread= God's every day amazing grace for which we are thankful beyond words, is the window on celebration

The fifth window got very personal as we prayed for forgiveness as we forgive others. Turns out Jesus has us praying for our *freedom*!

SALT TALK

Now our Lord leads us to this sixth window in His House of Prayer. This one opens as we pray,

“Lead us not into temptation...”

Just on the face of it this is troubling. *Why* does Jesus have us pray like this? I mean, just look at what we can already see through the first five windows!

WHY does Jesus have us asking our Father to not lead us into temptation? That Greek word we translate as “temptation” [PEIRASMOS] has a range of meaning from a period or process of testing or trial to enticing, and temptation.

James' counsel takes in this whole range. He begins.

“My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials [PEIRASMOIS] of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that testing of your faith produces endurance, and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing.”

James 1:2-4

Some translations of the Lord’s Prayer use this sense, ***“Lead us not into the time of trial...”***

Just a few verses later James writes,

“Blessed is anyone who endures temptation [PEIRASMON]. Such a one has stood the test and will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.”

James 1:12

Anticipating our question, James makes one point very clear:

“No one, when tempted [PEIRASMANOS], should say, ‘I am being tempted [PEIRAZOMAI] by God’; for God cannot be tempted [APEIRASTOS] by evil and he himself tempts [PEIRAZEI] no one.”

James 1:13

That answers the question, “Does God tempt us?” No.

What about “Does God test us?” That answer is yes.

Consider Israel in the wilderness for 40 long years

“Remember the long way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, in order to humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commandments...” (Deuteronomy 8:2, see the rest of this powerful chapter).

“Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for

that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not...” (Exodus 16:4)

At Sinai, ***“when all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance, and said to Moses, ‘You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die.’ Moses said to the people, ‘Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin.”***” (Exodus 20:18-20)

Proverbs 17 says

The crucible is for silver, and the furnace for gold, but the Lord tests the heart.” (Proverbs 17:3)

Paul weighs in,

“but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals, but to please God who tests our hearts.” (I Thessalonians 2:4)

So, no question about it. God tests, as in proves, like proving the metal, in His people. Testing takes time. Seasons.

Thing is, we all know all too well, as does our heavenly Father, how tests can become temptations, right?

You find a one-hundred-dollar bill lying on the ground. What do you do about it? It’s a little “test” of sorts. Not really a hard one. There are all kinds of options before us every day.

Occurred to me this morning thinking about this that every time I say I’ll do something I put myself to a test- will I? Or will I be tempted to, you know, take care of that “tomorrow”?

Just think for yourself how you’ve been tested this week? How do you think you made out?

-Maybe you were in a difficult conversation where you could feel the pull to exit, change the subject to something YOU wanted to talk about, or just to let your mind “wander”, I know that one.

-Maybe what you hear on the “news”, makes you feel like your blood was beginning to boil, maybe you thought about people you know who think that way; from somewhere there was the beginning of the thought to set them straight. What’s next? Maybe you began to picture how you would go about it.

Maybe that’s when a “test” become a “temptation”.

Is temptation a “sin”? Not yet... That comes in what we decide to do...

What about when it’s time to speak up? And instead say nothing.

Peter failed the test that night around the fire at Caiphas’ palace.

So, why does Jesus bring us to this sixth window?

I got my clue when I read again what happened to Jesus is in the Garden of Gethsemane.

We use this piece of art at the first Station of the Journey to the Cross. It shows what was happening better than anything else we could find. Other artists picture Jesus kneeling and praying piously. No. Jesus was in pitched spiritual battle. This was war. The Son of Man, God emptied into our flesh, to do what only God in the flesh could do, what had to be done and finished *forever*. What you and I will never be able to finally “explain”. Jesus is God in Person, with us, to take us on, to break evil- and the evil one. It was the only way to make all things new.

The guys at the Bible Project help us to begin to get what Jesus was up against in the Garden of Gethsemane.

VIDEO BIBLE PROJECT. [5:09]

<https://www.yoktutbe.com/watch?v=3dEh25pduQ8>

He came to crush the snake. That night in the Garden was the stare down. That night Jesus wanted, needed (!) his friends with Him. He told them,

“Sit here while I go over there to pray...” Then He began to be grieved and agitated. He said to them, “I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.”

Matthew 26:36-38

Imagine the Lord asking you to stay awake with Him.

We cannot fathom what was in that cup Jesus prayed might pass from Him.

But rather than standing watch with their Lord, Jesus came and found his friends sleeping. What He said to them helps me with my question why this sixth window:

“...could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial [PEIRASMON]; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

Matthew 26:40-41

There it was. There it is. Jesus needed His friends awake and alert, watching, ready to help.

He still does. For His sake, *but also for our own.*

But then they fell asleep *again, then again.*

I was taking a class for my Doctor of Ministry that for some reason I found boring. After yawning through one lecture the guy next to me, who was himself a spiritual director, asked me why I thought I was yawning so much. I said something like, “*I dunno, maybe because I’m sleepy?*” He smiled, “*No, because you are resisting what’s being taught...*”

Busted.

It's true.

When we are overwhelmed, we withdraw all sorts of ways, including by falling asleep. By numbing or distractions. Our tech saturated lives make it very easy to do this with screens. Sometimes, we dive into our screens to avoid the people or situation we are in. Rather than deal with them. We can all feel the "temptation" to distract from what's really happening. The test becomes a temptation.

And sometimes avoidance becomes a pattern that can calcify into addictions/or chronic attachments that wreak havoc on our souls and relationships.

What if we are being lulled away from the very things the Lord wants us to be alert and responsive to? It's hard to know when it's happening, right? The very nature of lulling is to *not* be aware. When we're being lulled our eyes grow heavy, our ears less and less distinguish sounds and voices. It all becomes murmuring and thrumming. Like white noise.

Anyone feeling sleepy?

It's why we need this sixth window.

Jesus taught us, told stories, demonstrated with His ministry with His very life that with His kingdom coming there will be resistance. This is so well depicted in the video we just watched. We live in between Jesus first coming and before his promised reappearance on that good Day when there will be no more tears or sorrow, when He will finish making all things new! For now, though, we have to keep our wits about us. He wants us alert! So: *it's on US* to keep awake.

Every hiker knows, it's not a good idea to go out on the trails with ear buds in your ears. There are snakes in the grass.

We can become tempted into what Albert Mohler in his book on the Lord's Prayer calls "the illusion of enemy-less discipleship".

So, Jesus has us pray in this sixth window "***Lead us not into temptation***"

1. Because when we are praying in this way, we are staying awake!!
 - a. READ the Parable of the Virgins Matthew 25:1-13
 - b. What helps you keep awake?
2. This is also a prayer for courage.
 - a. Lord help us, help me, stand watch, see, look straight at what tests and tempts me to want to run, hide, resist, yawn.

-We hold onto what Paul wrote. Let's read this together:

"No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may endure it." I Corinthians 10:13

- b. We Seasoned Adults are vulnerable because we can live in denial of our stage of life. A shift in the meaning of aging harkens back to Jan. 1, 1960, with the opening of Sun City, a retirement community in the Phoenix area of Arizona, Marc Freedman said. The community's founder, Del Webb, coined the term "the golden years."

Webb started the desert community with five home models, a recreation center, a golf course and shopping center. During its grand opening, 100,000 people showed up, and something unprecedented happened. In a country where aging is stigmatized, they were all having a good time in one place together, he said.

One of the great tragedies of our time is that older people have been told to pretend to be young people and to go play, Freedman said.

"Our whole vision of later life became a pale version of youth. It isn't sustainable to spend 30 years in a balloon payment of leisure," he said.

Increased longevity provides an opportunity to embrace the wisdom of life well lived, and society is squandering its best minds, he said.

Retirement communities major in comfort, “cruise ship” ethos. This is dangerous to the soul.

c. Eldering takes courage. Thinking about Ken Moore today...

3. So this is a prayer to stand guard, be ready, available to come alongside, to live and love like Jesus!

Let's read together I Thessalonians 5:1-11

Now concerning how and when all this will happen, dear brothers and sisters, we don't really need to write you. For you know quite well that the day of the Lord's return will come unexpectedly, like a thief in the night. When people are saying, "Everything is peaceful and secure," then disaster will fall on them as suddenly as a pregnant woman's labor pains begin. And there will be no escape.

But you aren't in the dark about these things, dear brothers and sisters, and you won't be surprised when the day of the Lord comes like a thief. For you are all children of the light and of the day; we don't belong to darkness and night. So be on your guard, not asleep like the others. Stay alert and be clearheaded. Night is the time when people sleep and drinkers get drunk. But let us who live in the light be clearheaded, protected by the armor of faith and love, and wearing as our helmet the confidence of our salvation.

For God chose to save us through our Lord Jesus Christ, not to pour out his anger on us. Christ died for us so that, whether we are dead or alive when he returns, we can live with him forever. So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.

I Thessalonians 5:1-11 NLT

- a. Jesus will seem to come like a thief only to those who do not expect Him or want Him around.
- b. Note verse 11: We need one another to help each of us to do this

TABLE TALK

1. What helps you to remain awake and alert to people you care about?
2. What helps you remain awake and alert to Jesus?
3. What are some ways lately that you experience resistance as a follower of Jesus?
4. Talk about the relationship between “testing and trial” and “temptation”. When does temptation fall into “sin”?
5. Where are you when you feel the most bored? Why do you think that might be?

WRAP UP

How keep awake? Some proposals:

1. The prayer of examen; usually practiced at the end of the day. To review with the Lord the plot points of your day...asking for insight and awareness of where you were tuned in to Him and his purposes and where you “fell asleep” and missed or went off track.

The simple pattern for this process is on your Table Guide Sheet—take with you and give it a try.

2. Practice spiritual disciplines: like fasting; prayer; scripture memorization; service; solitude; celebration.

Spiritual disciplines are practices that generations of followers of Jesus found helped them keep alert to His presence and purposes. But over time they can become routine and lose their impact. So from time to time we need to change them up!

3. Our late, great friend Norita—who served for years as a missionary in Turkey—had a spiritual practice/habit that has helped Suzanne and me. Before she would enter a situation, meet with someone, step into

a room, she would pause and ask, “Lord, I know You are already here. Help me see what You are doing so I can join You...”

4. Keep awake by “practicing His presence”. Here’s a wonderful resource among very many others.

Book-

https://www.amazon.com/Practice-Presence-Jesus-Meditations-Nearness/dp/0593444795/ref=asc_df_0593444795?mcid=0406e053dbdb38bdb11f08068f474ad6&tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=693310578148&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrnd=10131249382881411772&hvpone=&hvpstwo=&hvgmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9031174&hvtargid=pla-2195960031819&psc=1

Joni Earekson Tada in a helpful sort of dialogue with Brother Lawrence’s classic Practicing the Presence of God. We have this in our bookstore.

5. Remember to do THIS. To remind yourself of Whose you are!
6. STEP AWAY FROM DESK. When I move, I see everything from a new angle. I see myself, God, others in a new way. What moves do you need to make to break up the sameness and routine? Maybe it’s setting up an appointment. Signing up to go help in a place you’ve never been before. Getting involved in something where you’ll feel vulnerable because you’ve never done this before.

So take a walk!

WALK THE TALK

1. Journey to the Cross sign up
2. Reagan Library Dead Sea Scrolls tour sign up deadline
3. Save the date for the Car Show

A Primary School Version of the Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven, you are so awesome!
Show us who you are and how you want us to be.
Make earth more like heaven.
Please give us what we need to keep going each day.
Help us when we are wrong and clean us up on the inside.
Keep us from bad stuff.
You're in charge!
You're strong and powerful and always there.
Forever!
Amen**

BLESSING

RESOURCES FOR TABLE GUIDE SHEET

How to Pray the Examen:

1. **1. Begin with Gratitude:**

Start by acknowledging God's presence and thanking Him for the day's blessings.

2. **2. Review the Day:**

Reflect on the events, thoughts, feelings, and actions of the day, both positive and negative.

3. **3. Notice God's Presence:**

Pay attention to moments where you felt God's presence, guidance, or love. Ask yourself how God was working in your life.

4. **4. Identify Areas for Growth:**

Reflect on situations where you felt disconnected from God or where you acted in ways that weren't in alignment with His will.

5. **5. Ask for Grace:**

Pray for forgiveness and the grace to grow in holiness and to be more open to God's presence in the coming day.

6. **6. Look Towards Tomorrow:**

End with a prayer for God's guidance and strength for the day ahead.

(Google Search Prayer of Examen, AI

Experimental)

For pure practicality the Navy SEALs learn to manage sleep deprivation through a combination of strategies:

- **Tactical Naps:**

The Department of Defense recommends short, 20-minute "tactical naps" followed by caffeine to combat fatigue during operations.

- **"Banking" Sleep:**

If aware of a mission requiring sleep deprivation, SEALs are encouraged to "bank" sleep by getting extra rest beforehand.

- **Staying Active:**

Staying in constant motion and uncomfortable conditions can help combat the effects of sleep deprivation.

- **Mental Strategies:**

Psychological strategies, such as breaking down long periods into smaller stretches and maintaining a high level of focus, can help overcome fatigue.

- **The "40 Percent Rule":**

A mindset that when your mind tells you you're done, you're only at 40% of your actual capacity, encouraging pushing through fatigue.

- **The Navy SEAL Nap:**

A short 8-10 minute nap with legs elevated, popularized by former Navy SEAL Jocko Willink, is said to provide a quick recharge.

- **Caffeine:**

Caffeine is used to help stay awake and alert during sleep deprivation.