

4. October 2025

FIRST LETTER OF ST. JOHN

The evil one does not touch those born of God

1 Jn 5:14-21

And this is the confidence which we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have obtained the requests made of him. If any one sees his brother committing what is not a mortal sin, he will ask, and God will give him life for those whose sin is not mortal. There is sin which is mortal; I do not say that one is to pray for that. All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin which is not mortal. We know that any one born of God does not sin, but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him. We know that we are of God, and the whole world is in the power of the evil one. And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, to know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

We can be certain that God will hear our petitions if they align with His will. Our Father is pleased to help His children, knowing how needy we are. However, He also does so simply to bring us joy and assure us of His presence. Beyond personal petitions, God wants to work with us for the salvation of souls.

Some prayers are always answered. For instance, if we pray for humility and growth in love, or if we intercede for others, we can be certain that these pleas will be heard. In today's passage, St John speaks of praying for brothers and sisters living in 'venial sin'. It is important to intercede for them since these sins, though not leading to death, prevent grace from flowing freely.

St. John also says that if we direct our requests to God as He pleases, we can take them for granted. This is a great promise to us, the faithful, and it should encourage us to walk our path with the Lord, secure in His love and filled with confidence and faith.

This last point is very important. We know numerous passages in Scripture in which the Lord laments the lack of faith in men. After many of the healings He performed,

Jesus made it clear: *'Your faith has saved you'* (cf. Mt 9:22). Conversely, we know that He was unable to perform miracles in Nazareth, His hometown, because of the unbelief of its inhabitants (Mk 6:5-6).

Unfortunately, we must repeat the words of the Apostle John today: *'the whole world is in the power of the evil one'*. When he tempted Jesus in the desert, the devil offered Him all the kingdoms of this world (Mt 4:8-9), a fact which indicates their almost complete domination by the evil one. It is only possible to escape his deceptions by receiving from God "the understanding, to know him who is true". This is the One who, having risen from the dead, told His disciples — and therefore all of us — that *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me"* (Mt 28:18).

Deceptions will become even more subtle when the Antichrist takes over the government, but they are already present, preparing the way for his appearance. The worst deception is to consider evil as good and good as evil, as the prophet Isaiah warns: *'Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!'* (Isaiah 5:20).

Who can save us from such an insidious deception? The First Letter of St John, in its fifth chapter, has given us the answer, which can be summarised as follows: only an authentic relationship with the Lord, obedience to God's commandments and guidance from the Holy Spirit can protect us. For us Catholics, this means clinging to the traditional faith. We can certainly understand it more and more deeply, but we can never modify it.

At the end of his First Epistle, St John emphasises once again that Jesus Christ is *'the true God and eternal life'*. He concludes by warning the Christian community: *'keep yourselves from idols.'* Idols are anything that seeks to place itself on the same level as God, or even to take His place, seducing people's hearts. Unfortunately, there are many idols, and we must be vigilant so as not to fall into their trap.

Meditation on the day's reading: <https://en.elijamission.net/trust-in-god-in-dark-hours/>

Meditation on the day's Gospel: <https://en.elijamission.net/true-joy-3/>