

The Wilderness

YOUR DEEPEST NEED BECOMES A GIFT WHEN IT DRIVES YOU TO DEPEND ON GOD.

Things Jesus Never Said:

- Go into all the world and preach whatever makes people happy.
- Whoever wants to be my disciple, must affirm themselves, avoid the cross, and follow their own heart.
- Ask and it will be given to you, because God is your Celestial Sugar Daddy.

The Temptation of Jesus

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil. For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry. During that time the devil came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread.” But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ ” Then the devil took him to the holy city, Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, and said, “If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, ‘He will order his angels to protect you. And they will hold you up with their hands so you won’t even hurt your foot on a stone.’ ” Jesus responded, “The Scriptures also say, ‘You

must not test the Lord your God.’ ” Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. “I will give it all to you,” he said, “if you will kneel down and worship me.” “Get out of here, Satan,” Jesus told him. “For the Scriptures say, ‘You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’ ” Then the devil went away, and angels came and took care of Jesus.

—Matthew 4:1-11

The Temptation of Us

At dawn he [Jesus] appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. [Pause] They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.

—John 8:2-6a

Complicated—According Law of Moses—She’s guilty.

...But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger

—John 8:6b

- *What did he write? Later manuscripts [?] Wrote sins of the accusers.*
- *Graphein (GRAF-IN) means to write down. (Phil—Google search)*
- *Katagraphein—Kata against. Write down record against someone.*

He wrote the sins of the accusers not the accused!

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: “Now have come the salvation, power, kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Messiah. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.

—Revelation 12:10

BLAME, SHAME, AND CONDEMNATION ARE
ACCUSATIONAL.

IF JESUS IS NOT KEEPING ACCOUNT OF YOUR
FAULTS WHY SHOULD YOU?

When they kept on questioning him [Jesus], he straightened up and said to them, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.”

—John 8:7

Without sin—Without even wanting to sin.

Easy to see sins of others—Overlook our own—Lying cell phone.

Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you. Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."

—John 8:8-11

HE DID NOT SAY:

Go and do whatever makes you happy! Go now and follow your heart! Doesn't matter what you do!

HE DID SAY:

Go now—Urgency—Leave life of sin—Be different—Be free!

Why do we give into the temptation to sin? Sounds fun!
(Is fun)

Sin promises satisfaction at the cost of disobedience to God.

Without a belief in absolute truth, truth is defined by whatever makes me happy.

When the bottom line is my happiness, happiness becomes the standard by which I judge my actions.

So many think happiness and holiness are at odds.

If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him

—Matthew 7:11

!

Looking in wrong place!

Holiness isn't mutually exclusive of happiness.

Holiness is the pathway to true happiness and joy!

You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

—Psalms 16:11 NASB

Some of us are there right now...

Overeating— Can't stop overspending— Smoking,
Drinking, Prescription. Stuck in a lust-filled world porn.
Wrong type of relationships.

Sin promises satisfaction cost of disobedience God.

And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

— 1 Corinthians 10:13

When you find yourself trapped!

Every temptation is an invitation to depend on Christ!

Urgency—Go now and leave life of sin! Full of hope!

It's not Fear of what's bad—Longing for what's good.

Every temptation is an invitation to depend on Christ!

If you rebuke the enemy and return to God by repenting of your sins and receiving Christ, your spirit will be reborn, your mind renewed, your life rebuilt. You will be reconciled by Christ's redeeming work and reap the rewards of relationship causing revival to break free!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

How can we practically move away from the 'line' of temptation in our daily lives, and what barriers can we put in place to protect ourselves?

In what ways do we sometimes use our disappointments to justify disobedience, and how can we shift our perspective to align with Jesus' values instead?

How might our decisions be different if we truly magnified the cost of giving in to temptation, as Joseph did with Potiphar's wife?

What are some specific examples of how Satan tries to twist or undermine Jesus' values in our lives, and how can we recognize and resist these attempts?

How does the concept of 'restraint bias' apply to our spiritual lives, and what strategies can we use to avoid overestimating our ability to resist temptation?

In what ways can we pre-decide our responses to common temptations, and how might this practice strengthen our resolve in moments of weakness?

How does understanding that 'we make our decisions, but really our decisions make us' impact the way we approach decision-making in our spiritual journey?

What role does vulnerability and accountability play in overcoming temptation, and how can we cultivate these qualities in our relationships with others?

How can we shift our focus from trying to be 'pure and stay pure' to embracing Jesus' grace and allowing Him to make us pure?

In what ways can we practically apply the principle of moving from circumstance-based decisions to value-based decisions in our daily lives?