

# Matthew 4

## Temptations

Last week we studied John the Baptist preaching repentance and that the Kingdom of God is at hand.

People from all walks of life are coming to John repenting of their sins and being baptized. The religious people of the day come as well, they are wanting to see this crazy guy preaching and baptizing. What is this all about?

John shares with the people that this baptism is a picture of something greater that is coming soon.

### **Matthew 3:11**

***"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."***

Jesus came to restore your relationship with the Father, to save you from your sins and empower you with the Spirit of God, purifying you with fire. Bringing to us, Salvation! Redemption! New Life!

By dying on the cross, Jesus paid the price for our sins. And Jesus rose again, defeating death and hell so that we could be with God forever.

Have you accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior?  
Would you like to experience new life in Jesus?

So now we get to Matthew 4.

We are told of a difficult and essential element of the life of Jesus. God allowing Satan to tempt Jesus.

The Greek word for **tempt** or **test** is **peirazō** means-to try or test one's faith, virtue, character, by enticement to sin.

We will answer a few questions about this area of scripture that will hopefully bring clarity, comfort and peace to you.

1. Why did Jesus have to be tempted?
2. What can we learn from the example of Jesus during temptation?

### **Matthew 4:1-11**

***Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted 40 days and 40 nights, afterward He was hungry. Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."***

***But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"***

***Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, in their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone."***

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**Jesus said to him,  
"It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the LORD your God.'"**

**Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him,  
"All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me."**

**Then Jesus said to him,  
"Away with you, Satan!  
For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"**

**Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.**

Our 1<sup>st</sup> question, why did Jesus have to be tempted?

Remember Adam, the first man.  
Adam and Eve had a beautiful relationship with God.  
They lived in paradise! The Garden of Eden.  
God walked with Adam in the cool of the day and they had a wonderful connection.  
God the Father with His creation, Adam.  
But something happened.  
One day the enemy, a serpent came into the garden and questioned God's instruction to Eve.  
Turn to Genesis 3

**Genesis 3:1-6  
Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made.  
And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said,  
'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'"**

**And the woman said to the serpent,  
"We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden,  
God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'"**

**Then the serpent said to the woman,  
"You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."**

**So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.**

Adam and Eve were tempted.

- Tempted to not trust God (His Word)- **Has God indeed said?**
- Tempted to want to be like God- **knowing good and evil**
- Tempted to be satisfied- **So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise,**

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And in all of these temptations, man failed!

So what does this have to do with the temptation of Jesus?

Paul explains this in Romans 5

### **Romans 5:12**

***Therefore, just as through one-man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—***

Scripture tells us that sin entered the world thru one man, Adam  
Death entered the world thru Adam's sin. Death is the consequence for our sin.

### **Romans 6:23**

***For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

You see, things have now changed because of Jesus!

### **Roman 5:17-19**

***For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)***

***Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.***

***For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.***

What **one Man** could be righteous, do a righteous act?  
What **one Man** could be obedient in all so that we could be made righteous?

Yes, that is Jesus!  
So now we understand. Jesus had to actually BE obedient and BE righteous.  
And that can only be proven by going thru testing or temptations.

Go back to Matthew 4

### **Matthew 4:1-2**

***Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted 40 days and 40 nights, afterward He was hungry.***

This 1<sup>st</sup> verse is a struggle for some, but it really shouldn't be.  
As we have now learned, Jesus had to be tested!  
Jesus was led by the Spirit to be tempted or tested.

### **John 8:28-29**

***Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things. And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him."***

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Jesus did nothing unless the Father instructed.  
This testing had to happen! Why?

### **Romans 5:19**

***For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.***

Jesus was literally the perfect/sinless sacrifice! Jesus accomplished what we could not and because of Jesus victory, we can now be victorious.

He ***fasted for 40 days and 40 nights.***

Jesus was physically weak and fully human.  
Going 40 days without any food would put a man in the category of starvation.  
Jesus was tired, weak and hungry!

Isn't this usually the time that the enemy attacks? Of course it is!

### **Matthew 4:3-4**

***Now when the tempter came to Him, he said,  
"If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."  
But He answered and said,  
"It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"***

The question is asked, ***If You are the Son of God?***  
Some Greek scholars comment that the wording here is more like,  
Since ***You are the Son of God.***

Remember what happened in the last chapter? Jesus comes out of the water after being baptized and the Holy Spirit descends on Him and the Father says: ***This is My Son.***

OK, we know you are the Son of God, prove it!  
***command that these stones become bread.***

If you are God?  
You're hungry, do a miracle, turn these stones to bread.  
Satisfy yourself. There is no reason why you shouldn't be able to eat, right?

The enemy is so good at exploiting our weaknesses. And for Jesus, he was hungry.  
Yet turning stones to bread could seem to be a very understandable "fix" to the problem of hunger.  
Jesus, you are God, turn these stones into something to eat, come on, you are hungry. You deserve to have your hunger satisfied. If starvation is happening in your physical body, you need food to live.

But what is the example Jesus gives us?  
Satisfying my physical needs are not as important as being obedient!  
Getting bread or something to eat is NOT the most important thing. Even in this time of need.  
Obedience to every word of God IS the most important thing!

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### **Matthew 4:4**

***But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"***

Jesus quotes scripture in response to the temptation from the enemy.

Quoting **Deuteronomy 8:3**

It is vital to your life to be in God's word!

Please join us as a church as we read thru the Bible in a year. We have the Daily Bible Reading schedules on the church website or email us and we can send you one.

God's word, we must know it AND we must be obedient to it.

Understand that Jesus isn't saying eating isn't important, it is!  
But not as important as God's word, every word!

Jesus didn't receive any instruction from God to turn stones to bread to satisfy His hunger. He couldn't and wouldn't act on His physical needs or the suggestion from the tempter.

### **Matthew 4:5-7**

***Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him,***

***"If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written:***

***'He shall give His angels charge over you and in their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'***

Now Satan takes Jesus to Jerusalem. To the top of the temple.

Throw yourself down or jump Jesus.

God's word says that the angels will catch you.

Since you are the Son of God and all? Do it! Show us who you are!

Satan quoting **Psalms 91:11-12**

So let's determine something.

- Is God's word true? Yes?
- IF Jesus were to show this act of power, would the angels catch Him? Yes
- Is this God's will? NO!

When is Jesus supposed to sacrifice Himself?

On the cross! In a selfless act! To pay for the sins of the world.

Should Jesus prove that He is the Messiah by performing for Satan? Absolutely NOT!

- Jesus knows who He is and why He is here.
- Satan knows who Jesus is as well.

This stunt proves nothing other than the manipulation by Satan.

God is not manipulated, especially by Satan. And neither should we.

We need to be very discerning when we are tempted to put God thru some kind of performance test.

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### **Matthew 4:7**

**Jesus said to him, "It is written again,  
'You shall not tempt the LORD your God.'"**

Jesus again quotes scripture in the proper context. Satan quoted scripture out of context. Jesus quotes the book of Deuteronomy again. **Deuteronomy 6:16**

Jesus came to save us. Not to perform tricks.

### **Luke 19:10**

**"for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."**

### **John 3:14-17**

**"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.**

**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**

**For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.**

Jesus came for 1 reason only, to save us! To give us life, a relationship with God. Forever!

Satan now tries a personal tactic.

### **Matthew 4:8-9**

**Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.**

**And he said to Him,**

**"All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me."**

Satan offers Jesus something in exchange for worship. And we must determine something in his offer.

Is Satan offering something that is actually his?

- Jesus told us in **John 5** that **the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.**
- **Revelation 11** tells us that **the kingdoms of the world will become the kingdoms of the Lord** at the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ.

So Satan has influence and some control over the world.

But to understand this we must return to Genesis.

Adam willingly gave authority over this world to Satan by his sin in the garden.

That authority given to Adam by the God in **Genesis 1:28-29.**

Of course, ultimately, all things belong to God; but God allows Satan to function as the god of this age for a purpose. This is why the fallen world is in the mess it is.

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### **2 Corinthians 4:4**

***whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.***

If Satan succeeded here, the cross would have been avoided.

Satan's goal here was to get Jesus to worship him. The same goal Satan has for us today.

It's the thing he does with all of us.

Anything that God calls sin, Satan wants us to participate in.

- We worship the enemy when we live contrary to God's Word.
- We worship the Lord in our obedience to God's Word.

### **1 John 2:15-17**

***Do not love the world or the things in the world.***

***If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.***

***For all that is in the world—***

***the lust of the flesh,***

***the lust of the eyes,***

***and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.***

***And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.***

These 3 things Jesus is tempted with by Satan.

And in the weak, physical state of Jesus, He is not conceding because God has other plans. Redemption of mankind. Relationship with His creation!

### **Matthew 4:10**

***Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan!***

***For it is written,***

***'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'*** "

Jesus then rebukes Satan.

- Away with you-NKJV
- Get out of here-NLT
- Be gone-ESV

Jesus has proven that He will not be swayed!

And again, quotes scripture! **Deuteronomy 6:13**

Jesus reminds us all that there is only One that is worthy of worship, ***the LORD your God.*** Jehovah Elohim.

Jesus deals with every temptation that is given to Him.

Everything that the enemy could throw at Jesus and He comes thru victorious!

Why did Jesus endure this temptation? For you and I.

### **Philippians 2:6-8**

***who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,***

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***but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.***

***And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.***

The perfect sacrifice, fully God and fully man.  
And because Jesus has walked as a man with no sin, He can help us.

***Hebrews 2:18***  
***For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.***

He understands what we are going thru and can help us because He has been thru it as well.

The devil, the enemy, the tempter, the deceiver, the liar will always attack when we are at our most vulnerable.  
He will find the places in our lives where we are weak and he will strike.

One commentator wrote:  
*From the temptation of Jesus, we learn that the devil can attack those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit, but that he is powerless against those who resist him with the Word of God.*

Jesus was fully submitted to the Father.  
So the question begs to you, are you fully submitted to the Lord?  
Is Jesus actually Lord of your life?

***Matthew 4:11***  
***Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.***

The devil leaves and angels come to minister to Jesus.

We are not really given any explanation of this other than Jesus receives supernatural assistance.

What can we learn from the example of Jesus during temptation?

We see here that the enemy will attack at weak moments of our lives.  
And Jesus always responds with God's word and stands His ground.

***James 4:7-8***  
***Therefore, submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.***  
***Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.***

Now don't quote that verse and focus just on the resisting part.  
We need to submit to God first.

***1 Corinthians 10:12-13***  
***Therefore, let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.***

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***No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.***

We all know our weaknesses.

We need to be wise and guard ourselves in those weak areas.

You need to run and get away from those things that tempt you!

(guy with the pornography problem-convenience store)

***Galatians 5:16***

***I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.***

We have a choice to make, do we give in to temptation? No

God will make a way and do we chose that way out?