



## 5: When Temptation Visits (Matthew 4:1-11)

Every person has faced & fallen to temptation, except for ONE. Jesus faced temptation and stood strong. Today we discover why Jesus went out to be tempted by the Devil, and how His response to temptation helps us stand strong *when temptation visits*.

### beourguest

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### teachingnotes

**When Temptation Visits**, different people respond different ways.

- Some of us quickly bite the bait.
- Some of us have learned from the past, but *when temptation visits*, we are still drawn to take a quick peak.
- But what if we were fully aware...that the bait - even if it's real - is hanging from a HOOK?

**Today we discover how Jesus overcame temptation and what that means for us.**

It's NOT sin to BE tempted. If it were, then Jesus would have sinned and would not be an adequate Savior for you and me. Every human being will be tempted. The only question is whether or not we will resist or bow.

☀ "You cannot keep the bird from flying over your head, but you can keep it from nesting in your hair."

**Catch the Context:** Jesus was baptized by John, the **Holy Spirit** descended on Him & God the Father said, "This is my son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased." (Mt 3:17)

### Led by the Spirit to be Tempted

#### Matthew 4:1-2 (NIV)

Then **Jesus was led by the Spirit** into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

**Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness**, a place He would be **for 40 days & 40 nights**. I don't know how long you've camped out, but 40 days outside is a LONG TIME...especially with NO FOOD!

- **Moses** was with God 40 days and nights without food or water as he chiseled out the commandments on the stone tablets (Ex. 34:28). **Elijah** fasted for 40 days traveling the wilderness to the mountain of God (1 Kgs. 19:8).

**Luke 4:1-2a** (NIV) Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil.

- **Devil** is the Greek term *diabolos* meaning "slanderer". NOW he gets his shot at *his Creator - in human form*. **John 1:3** says that Jesus created ALL THINGS and **Col 1** says this:

**Colossians 1:15-16** (CSB) He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For **everything was created by Him**, in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities— **all things have been created through Him and for Him**.

**Firstborn** is referring to Jesus' authority over all, since **everything was created by Him**.

**The visible and invisible** that Jesus created would include angels and fallen angels - like the Slanderer.

The tempter who has knocked out so many sons of Adam, now faces the ONE the apostle Paul refers to as "the last Adam" (1 Cor 15:45-47).

### Temptation #1

#### Matthew 4:3 (NIV)

**The tempter came to him** and said, "If you are **the Son of God**, tell these stones to become bread."

**Jesus was hungry...just like you would be** after not eating for 40 days. The devil capitalizes on a human's most powerful desire - food. THIS is the temptation: **Tell these stones to become bread? What's wrong with THAT?**

Fully human, **Jesus is waiting for the Father to provide for His physical needs**. The accuser is suggesting that the Father didn't have His best interests in mind.

## TEMPTATION #1: Doubt Father's Faithfulness & Satisfy Yourself.

**That's the same temptation we face.** It's the same temptation that caused Adam & Eve to fall...and it's the same trick used today. The enemy whispers "It's been so long! Why wait on...food, sex, money, position, power? God's trying to keep you from something good. If He really loved you, He wouldn't keep you from THIS. Don't wait on Him. After all, you deserve this...NOW! Satisfy yourself."

### Jesus Counters with Scripture

#### Matthew 4:4 (NIV)

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Jesus is quoting from Deut 8:3, 1400 years before when Moses speaks to the Jewish people about to enter the Promised Land. Like Jesus, there was a time when the people of Yahweh were hungry in the wilderness, yet Yahweh provided for their needs.

**Deuteronomy 8:3** (NIV) He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

Although Yahweh God had provided manna for his people in the wilderness for 40 years, He reminds them that food only sustains the stomach for a moment, **but it does not satisfy the soul.**

• Bread satisfies the stomach, but **knowing and doing God's word satisfies the soul.**

**This is the heartbeat of Jesus** - to trust the Father & obey His words. Later in His ministry the disciples notice that Jesus is once again hungry and they are concerned about him needing to eat. Jesus responds, "My food...is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work." (Jn 4:34)

• **Trusting the Father's HEART, Jesus will wait on the Father's HAND.**

When temptation visits Jesus is able to overcome, because...

### BIG TRUTH: TRUST CONQUERS TEMPTATION

›Stop doubting the Father's faithfulness. Trust and obey while you wait for His provision to meet your needs.

### Temptation #2

#### Matthew 4:5-6 (NIV)

Then **the devil** took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are **the Son of God**," he said, "throw yourself down. For **it is written**: "He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone." [Ps 91:11-12]

• If Satan tries the twist the Scripture with the *Author of Scripture*...he will certainly throw the same bait our way.

### TEMPTATION #2: Twist the intention of Scripture.

**Ps 91** doesn't promise that the Father would protect Jesus, or us, from doing stupid stuff. Jumping from a high building and expecting God to catch you isn't TRUSTING God, it's **TESTING** God. That's not faith, that's *Foolishness*. The whole Psalm is about **TRUSTING God** (Ps 91:2), but the slanderer attempts to **TWIST the intention of the Scripture** on its head.

### Jesus Counters with Scripture

#### Matthew 4:7 (NIV)

Jesus answered him, "It is also **written**: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" [Deut 6:16]

When the Devil twisted the intention of Scripture, Jesus quickly counters with what is clear from Scripture. *Jesus will TRUST the Father instead of putting Him to the TEST.*

The Devil continues this tactic today - twisting the Scriptures - and thousands of people have no discernment and are lulled to sleep by those who misuse the Scripture by telling them what they want to hear - *if people are going to READ the Bible, the enemy wants them to MISREAD the Bible.*

False teachings like those from Word/Faith, Mormonism, & Jehovah's Witness do this very thing - **TWISTING the intention of Scripture to lead people AWAY from the Biblical Jesus.**

☀ Check out our "Trusting The Word of God" teaching series ([bit.ly/WordOfGodSeries](http://bit.ly/WordOfGodSeries))

❓ **What do you do when others Twist the intention of Scripture?**

- Bite the bait?
- Or do you see it for what it is - One of the Devil's greatest tricks? If He used it on Jesus...he'll use it on you.
- Will you go back to the Bible and see what it says and means? Will you warn others of this Devilish tactic?

Once again we see how Jesus responds when temptation visits.

### TRUST CONQUERS TEMPTATION

Jesus TRUSTS the Scriptures instead of TWISTING the Scriptures.



TRUSTING THE  
WORD OF GOD

## Temptation #3

### Matthew 4:8-9 (NIV)

Again, the **devil** took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "All this I will give you," he said, "**if you will bow down and worship me.**"

Dr. Luke gives us more insight, "I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. If you worship me, it will all be yours." (Luke 4:5-6).

Jesus looks out over the vast amount of land ruled by others - as far as the eye can see (then & future). The devil claims **all the kingdoms of the world** have been **given to him**. While Jesus later refers to the devil as "the ruler of this world" (John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11), meaning his evil influence dominates the nations of the world, that doesn't mean He is the ultimate authority (after all someone gave him this authority). The Scripture declares that all belongs to God.

It's as if the devil says, "Look Jesus. **We all know the plan is for You to be King. Let's just speed up the process. Sidestep the suffering and take the throne. And all you have to do is (HERE'S THE HOOK): bow your knee to me.**"

### TEMPTATION #3: Pursue the Crown & Bypass the Cross

Michael Wilkins writes: "What a cruel enticement! Those kingdoms are the very reason Jesus has laid aside his own glory. His ultimate purpose is to gather the nations into the kingdom of God (Mt 25:31-34). But before he sits on his royal throne, he must hang on the cross. So the devil offers a shortcut."<sup>1</sup>

**What if Jesus took THAT shortcut and bit that bait? We would have no hope.** If not for His suffering, you and I would have NO salvation! If Jesus took the CROWN and bypassed the CROSS, then we would still be in our sin with NO PAYMENT for our sins. But Jesus would be the suffering servant before He becoming the conquering king. Regardless of the offer, He will bow to none other.

### Jesus Counters with Scripture

#### Matthew 4:10-11 (NIV)

Jesus said to him, "Away from me, **Satan!** For **it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'**" [Deut 6:13] Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

**Satan** is the term for adversary or enemy. Jesus has had enough of His **enemy** and it's time for him to go. Jesus was so drained that **angels came and attended to him**.

Once again, notice how Jesus counters the devil...with Scripture. (Deut. 6:13 Worship Yahweh)

### Scripture is a pretty big deal to Jesus

❓ **How significant is the Scripture in your life?** Do you read, memorize, obey it? Or do you make the childish claim, "I don't have enough time."

- Those who don't have enough time for God's Scripture are primed to be picked off by the enemy.
- They are much more likely to give into the suggestion to **Pursue the Crown & Bypass the Cross**. Taking up the cross and following Jesus will cost you. To **worship the Lord your God and serve Him only** will cost something. Those who don't know or trust God's Word will choose to prosper rather than suffer - to **Pursue the Crown & Bypass the Cross**.

**When Temptation Visits** you have a choice - to bite the bait...OR lean on the Lord knowing that...

### TRUST CONQUERS TEMPTATION

❓ What is the long-term benefit of your TRUST or the long-term consequence of your lack of trust in God?

- Do you sense God's Presence *or does He seem distant*?
- Are you living in purity & freedom OR *sin & guilt*?
- Do you have purpose, or are you wandering aimlessly trying to find something to fill that hole in your soul?

### Jesus Became Human to Help Humans

#### Hebrews 2:14-18 (NIV)

Since the children have flesh and blood, **he too shared in their humanity** so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, **the devil**—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels He helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason **He had to be made like them, fully human in every way**, in order that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that He might make atonement for the sins of the people. **Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.**

<sup>1</sup> Michael J. Wilkins, Matthew, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2004), 160.

## Hebrews 4:15-16 (NIV)

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been **tempted in every way, just as we are**—yet He did not sin. Let us then **approach God's throne of grace with confidence**, so that **we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need**.

This is our great hope! We can bring our struggles to Jesus' feet and ask for His help. After all, **Jesus is our merciful high priest** who understands our struggles; **our Undefeated Champion who has given His sinless life** to pay for our sinful lives and set us free!

**The next time temptation visits**, may we remember and act on this BIG TRUTH...

### **BIG TRUTH: TRUST CONQUERS TEMPTATION**

#### **5 Step Prep for When Temptation Visits...**

1. **Seek Jesus for forgiveness & help.** Those who TRUST Jesus & repent of sin will receive the GIFT of the Holy Spirit who will empower you to live in righteousness.
2. **Study the Scripture.** You can't DO what God says if you don't KNOW what God says.
3. **Make wise choices.** Don't put yourself in a tough situation. Don't spend a bunch of time with peers who are a bad influence. Don't go to places where you are likely to fall to temptation.
4. **Find the Escape Hatch.** 1 Cor. 10:13 says God will provide a way out of temptation. Maybe it's leaving the location. Go find something GOOD to participate in. Find the escaped hatch and run away from sin!
5. **Tell a brother/sister.** Fellowship believers can pray for you & help you. How does Satan bait your hook? Tell them. Most people don't do this...until it's *TOO LATE*.

## heretoseveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

- \* Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), **Caleb** (864-315-8015), or another follower of Jesus soon!
- \* Or call our **deacons & wives**: Alan & Christy Androski (850-464-1428), Steve & Debbie Bass (850-673-7952), Freddy & Joyce Howard (850-973-0047), Tim & Joni Hughey (850-464-1156), Mark & Dot Mancil (850-253-5405), Boss & Amelia Mulkey (850-464-6717), or Tom & Martha Waddail (850-973-0011).

## discussionquestions

Take some time to discuss these questions with your family, friends, or group.

1. What challenged or encouraged you most from today's teaching? (You might need to look back in your notes to help explain your answer.)
2. **Read Matthew 4:1-11.** What role did the Scriptures play in Jesus responding to the Devil's temptations? If Jesus leaned on the Scriptures when tempted, what should this say to us about the importance of knowing and trusting the Scriptures?
3. Out of the 3 temptation tactics: 1) Doubt Father's Faithfulness & Satisfy Yourself 2) Twist the intention of Scripture 3) Pursue the Crown & Bypass the Cross, which one are you most likely to be tempted by? Explain your answer and discuss the long-term benefits vs the long-term consequences of obedience vs. disobedience.
4. **Read Colossians 1:15-16** and discuss how significant the temptation of Jesus is in light of these biblical claims.
5. **Read Hebrews 2:14-18 & 4:15-16.** Why should these truths encourage us to approach Jesus with our sin struggles?
6. Discuss the **5 Step Prep** to conquer temptation, and share the practical ways these actions can help us obey the Lord.
7. Share prayer needs and pray for one another.