

Resources:

Dr. S. Lewis Johnson. *Sermon - The Temptation of Christ*. Believers Chapel

Mr. Nathan Reichert. *Theology 1 notes*. FSB

Mr. John Miles. *Doctrine 1 notes*. Pg. 42-43. FSB

Was it possible for Jesus to sin? Was it possible for Jesus to fail? Was Jesus capable of falling into sin, or was it impossible for Jesus to sin?

There are three books of the Bible that give an account of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. Those books are Matthew, Mark, and Luke. **Matthew 4:1-11**, **Mark 1:12-13**, and **Luke 4:1-13**.

Let's make some observation of this narrative of Matthew's account of the temptation.

(Observation #1) - Jesus was led by the Spirit of God into the wilderness to be tempted by the adversary, by the devil, by Satan himself.

(Observation #2) - Jesus fasted 40 days and nights before the temptations came.

(Observation #3) - The devil tempted Jesus three times. The first time was a temptation appealing to physical satisfaction. The second temptation, I think, was an appeal to pride. It was an appeal for Jesus to show off what He could do. The third temptation was an appeal to material possessions and power, of course, at the cost of worshiping one who is no god at all.

(Observation #4) - Jesus resisted the temptation each time with the Word of God. He had a careful, prayerful, thorough, deep, and accurate understanding of every word that comes from the mouth of God. He knew the Old Testament so well that He could quote it in any given situation.

Now that we have looked at Jesus' temptation and made some observations, I would like to take us to some other texts of Scripture that teach us about the sinless-ness of Jesus.

Hebrews 4:14-15

1 Peter 2:21-23

1 John 3:5

2 Corinthians 5:21

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST NOT ONLY PROVED TO BE SINLESS IN THE MIDST OF TEMPTATION, BUT HE WAS INCAPABLE OF SIN; IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR JESUS TO SIN.

I believe the Word of God teaches us that Jesus could not sin, that His temptations were real and valid, He was fully human even though He could not sin, and because He is God, He could not sin. Now, I will spend some time defending that statement. I'll point out to you 3 Biblical reasons I believe Jesus could not sin.

Biblical Reason #1 - There is no Biblical record of sin in the life of Jesus even though there is clear record of Him being tempted to do what would be sin.

According to Websters, **impeccable** means not capable of sinning or wrongdoing.

My teacher at FSB, Mr. Reichert, defined impeccability this way: "The word impeccability means being not able to or incapable of sin. In regard to Jesus, it is the doctrine which states Jesus, being God, could not sin."

Jesus could not sin because He is the only human who has never sinned, even though He was tempted. Sin was first introduced into the human race through Adam and Eve in the garden in Genesis 3, and ever since then, the entire human race has been subject to sin. The testimony of the Word of God teaches us in **Romans 3:23** that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." That is, all people except Jesus Christ have sinned. Jesus is the only one who didn't sin.

This is something unique to Jesus, so that makes people question His temptation. The concern is this: if Christ was not capable of sinning, then His temptations could not have been valid or real. People will make this argument. Jesus must have been capable of sinning because if He wasn't capable of sinning, then His temptations were all just for show and were not real temptations. Here is the problem with that. We already read from **Hebrews 4:15** that Jesus was tempted in every respect as we are. That means Jesus was tempted in the same way that man is tempted, and yet He did not sin. So, the Bible tells us that His temptations were real. He actually did face valid temptation, but He proved that He could not sin because He never gave into those temptations.

Biblical Reason #2 - Jesus faced external temptation just like Adam and Eve, but He had victory instead of defeat.

If we compare the temptations of Jesus with the temptation of Adam and Eve in the garden, we will find that Jesus was uniquely incapable of sinning because Adam and Eve sinned even though, like Jesus, they did not possess a sin nature at the time of their temptation.

Adam and Eve are the only humans other than Jesus to live for a time without sin. They were innocent of sin and were not born with a sin nature. They were created without sin and God called them good. He did not call them sinners like He now calls all of humanity. It was not until after they sinned that they were classified as sinners, and their sin nature was then passed down from generation to generation so that all people possess the sin nature.

When Adam and Eve were tempted, they were not tempted internally, being lured and enticed by their own desires. They were still tempted though. If they weren't tempted internally, how then, were they tempted? Externally. They were tempted by Satan. Jesus was tempted just like they were. He did not possess a sin nature, so when He was tempted, it was a real temptation, but it did not come internally from His own desires, it came to Him externally. He was tempted by another agent. He was tempted by Satan.

What we find as we compare Jesus with Adam and Eve is that their temptations were both from the same source, but Adam and Eve proved to be capable of sinning because they did sin when they were tempted, but Jesus did not sin when He was tempted.

One of the reasons I bring this contrast between Adam and Eve with Jesus up is because someone might say, "Jesus probably was not fully human if He could not sin, because the true experience of humanity includes sin."

That might sound like a good argument, but it doesn't square with the Word of God. Not only were Adam and Eve real humans and lived for a time without sin, but the redeemed people in eternity will be human and be without a sin nature and immune to sin. One day, all of us who have believed in Jesus for salvation will be separated from a sin nature and we will be humans, living without sin, and we will not sin any more. Mr. Reichert said, "an ability to sin does not make a person human."

Biblical Reason #3 - Because sin is that which is contrary to the nature of God and Jesus is God, Jesus could not sin because that would make Him capable of being something that is contrary to His very own divine nature.

Sin means missing the mark. **If you track sin throughout the Bible you will discover that sin is that which is contrary to the holy character and nature of God.**

Mr. John Miles defined sin as follows: "sin is the transgression of, or lack of conformity to, the holy character of God.

Sin is a contradiction of the character of God. Sin is the opposite of God. God is so separated from sin that anything God does is not sin and if God did anything that was considered sin, if He did it, it would actually no longer be considered sin.

Texts of Scripture to examine:

Psalm 145:17

1 John 5:17

You might say at this point, "what does this have to do with Jesus?" This has everything to do with Jesus because Jesus is God.

John 1:1

If Jesus is God, and God never does that which is sin because sin is the opposite of the character and nature of God, then Jesus could not sin.

Because Jesus is God - because He is divine, He cannot sin. He could be tempted because He is human, but because He is God, He cannot sin.

So our three Biblical reasons for why we believe that Jesus was not capable of sin are: #1 - The Bible teaches that He faced temptation and did not sin. #2 - The Bible teaches that He was victorious over external temptation while Adam and Eve (along with the rest of humanity) were failures in temptation, and #3 - Because Jesus is God and sin is contrary to the nature of God, Jesus would not and could not do anything against His own divine nature.

So our final answer concerning this question, "is it possible for Jesus to fail?" No.

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How do we find victory in the midst of temptation? How can we overcome temptation? How can we resist? How can we find spiritual maturity and victory when the temptations to sin are so strong?

I'll leave you tonight with 4 recommendations.

- #1 - Admit the truth of your sinfulness and sinful desires to Almighty God. Romans 3:1-11
- #2 - Ask God for His help and His strength and rely upon Him instead of you. Ephesians 6:10
- #3 - Confess openly and honestly to God immediately after you are convicted of sin. 1 John 1:9
- #4 - Carefully study the Word of God so that your mind is retrained and you think like God wants you to think. Romans 12:2