

# Matthew 4:1-17

## Perfect Power

Image Church // Perfect Hope Week 4

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### Introduction

Good morning Image Family...

If you're **NEW** with us welcome! Stop by the **Connection Center**!

Hey, listen HUGE announcement this weekend... A month ago we concluded a foundational series called **Abide and Abound** that was based out of **John 15:4-5** where I laid out the blueprint for where we're headed over the next year...

In that series I held up **two primary goals** that we're going to be orienting around over the next year...

**1. Abide:** We want to abide in the riches of the gospel in order to take us deeper in our knowledge and love of God.

**2. Abound:** We want to abound in the gospel by bearing fruit that expands our impact locally, nationally, and internationally.

In addition to that, one of the things I asked you to consider was financially contributing **above and beyond** your normal giving to what we called The **Abide and Abound Initiative** in order to specifically fuel these goals...

Where every dollar given toward this initiative is goes directly towards enhancing our missional efforts **locally, nationally, and internationally**, to help catalyze our missional efforts over the next year...

Specifically on a **local level** we want to:

- Enhance our next generations ministry here at Image Church...
- We want to bolster our relationships with local schools that we are connected to...
- We want to take active steps toward engaging in Foster Care, and resourcing those who are actively participating Foster Care...
- We want to partner in adoption efforts...
- We want to have better resources to care for Widows and others who are venerable in our society...
- We want to enhance our partnership with Lovewell Inc. and other organizations where our people are present.
- We want to enhance our Neighboring efforts...
- We want to establish our missional footprint in the city...

### Nationally:

We want to increase our church planting efforts- we believe that the church is Gods plan for reaching people and so we want to be about church planting...

- This means establishing a framework for multiplication...

We want to increase our partnerships with the churches we have already partnered with... **Proclamation Church** in Nashville TN, and **Coastway Church** in Myrtle Beach SC...

We want to expand to add in some additional partners that are advancing the gospel through church planting...

### Internationally:

We are sending out our first ever international missionaries who are covenant members of our church...

The **Cobbs** are being sent out to go to **Eastern Europe** to plant a church and to work with an unreached people group that doesn't have gospel access...

- This means that we carry the weight of helping fund their efforts together...

We want to bolster our partnership with **Blossom Creek in Honduras** which is a training hub for pastors who are equipped and trained to take the gospel back to their villages...

We want to expand to additional international opportunities through **Compassion International** helping to plant churches and Child development centers in places where there's needs...

And the challenge was to give to that end so that we could see these things become a reality over the next year...

And Church family you answered the call in a HUGE way... Are you ready for this...? **The total amount that you committed together is...**

**\$57,280 ... Can we put our hands together and celebrate that!!**

Church, as your Pastor I have never been more proud of the way that you have responded to the call of the gospel and I cannot wait to see all that God does...

Can we just pray together and thank God and commit these gifts to him for His glory...

## Pray

Well, we've been in a series called **Perfect Hope** where we're diving into the first **4 chapters** of the book of **Matthew** and looking at how Jesus is the **perfect hope**...

This morning we're going to be in **Matthew Chapter 4**, if you have your Bibles go ahead and turn there... We're going to be looking at the temptation of Jesus which is such a fascinating encounter...

As you're turning there one thing to note is that Jesus is the perfect Son of God and yet he's tempted...

Don't mistake temptation as a sin...

- **Sin** is when you **succumb** to the temptation at hand...

You're not doing something wrong if you're being tempted...

**One theologian says it like this:** *It's a lie to believe that if your heart was 'right' enough or more 'pure' then you wouldn't have these temptations. Look at Jesus.<sup>1</sup>*

**Here's what this means...** it means that you can't outrun temptation... Jesus didn't spend his time on earth running from temptation... He endured it...

And this morning we're going to look at what that means for us and the implications it has on our lives... *Alright let's jump into our text...*

## Matthew 4:1-17

**1** Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. **2** After he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. **3** Then the tempter approached him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."  
**4** He answered, "**It is written: Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.**"  
**5** Then the devil took him to the holy city, had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, **6** and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written:

**He will give his angels orders concerning you, and they will support you with their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.**"

**7** Jesus told him, "**It is also written: Do not test the Lord your God.**"  
**8** Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. **9** And he said to

<sup>1</sup> Tim Keller, *The Zeal of Jesus*

him, "I will give you all these things if you will fall down and worship me."

**10** Then Jesus told him, "Go away, Satan! For it is written: **Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.**"

**11** Then the devil left him, and angels came and began to serve him.

**12** When he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. **13** He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. **14** This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: (9:1-2)

**15** Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,  
along the road by the sea, beyond the Jordan,  
Galilee of the Gentiles.

**16** The people who live in darkness  
have seen a great light,

and for those living in the land of the shadow of death,  
a light has dawned.

**17** From then on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near."

Here's where we need to start and then we can work out... The Primary thing that you need to see here is the perfection of Jesus, His ability to reject temptation and stand firm...

The question is, why is this moment so important? I mentioned this last week, but what we see is the substitution of Jesus not only in His death but also in His life...

And this never gets old, it's a beautiful reality that we can continue to explore and see the impacts of...

Jesus enters into our broken reality He identifies with our humanity...

- You see the empathy of God...
- You also see the intentionality of God...
- But more than anything you see the grace and mercy of God, that He doesn't leave us to ourselves but He comes to us to redeem us...

And the way He does that is by taking our place... And I want you to see How God mirrors this so clearly here...

Flip to Genesis 3 real quick first book of the bible... This is the fall... And let's read it together...

### Genesis 3:1-6

Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the wild animals that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You can't eat from any tree in the garden'?"

**2** The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit from the trees in the garden. **3** But about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, God said, 'You must not eat it or touch it, or you will die.' "

**4** "No! You will certainly not die," the serpent said to the woman.

**5** "In fact, God knows that when you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." **6** The woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

We see Adam and Eve were tempted by **3 Categories** that John would highlight later in **1 John 2:16**... These are 3 important categories...

- Lust of the flesh
- Lust of the eyes
- Pride of life/possessions

**Good for food**- Lust of the flesh

**Delightful to look at**- lust of the eyes

**Desirable to obtain wisdom/be like God**- Pride of life/possessions

It was these **3 temptations** that Adam and Eve succumbed to that lead to their disobedience...

**Now watch this...** What we see here with Jesus is that He's tempted by the same 3 categories...

- *Rocks to bread- **this is lust of the flesh***
- *Throw yourself off the temple and let the angels save you: **Pride of life***
- *Shown the splendor of all the Kingdoms of this world- I will give you these things: **Lust of the eye***

Jesus is face to face with the same temptations that Adam and even fell to that caused the world to unravel at the entrance of sin, and Jesus does not fall...

Jesus is the greater Adam, He did what Adam and Even could not do...

So not only to do we see evidence of His power, but we also see again, His **substitution**... Jesus' perfect obedience in place of your disobedience! **Jesus is our perfect hope in the midst of our disobedience**

The temptation of Jesus is a mark of freedom and hope as we look at Jesus who is our perfect hope in the midst of our sin and separation from God...

Now watch this, I want to keep walking into this... Because not only is there an incredible reality that we see about Jesus, but there's also some important things that we need to learn as we look at what happened here...

To state the obvious, **in the same way that Jesus was tempted, you and I will be tempted**... So we want to dive in and process this...

Here's the thing that the enemy will do- he will seek to lure you away from Jesus as your perfect hope...

Satan's primary tactic- lies...

- He comes to Adam and Eve and He leads in with "**did God really say**..."

The enemy comes to Jesus with "**If you are the Son of God**..."

Satan is doing this right after God had just said at Jesus' Baptism: *You are My beloved Son; with you I am well pleased*...

See, Satan was attempting to call into question that which God had already specifically declared to be a reality...

**One pastor says it like this:** *Satan will always put question marks in your life where God has put periods*...<sup>2</sup>

**A temptation is going to be an invitation that rivals a truth of God**... It will attempt to call into question that which God has declared...

Listen **most of the time**, one of the ways that you can know that you're being tempted and you're about to fall headfirst into is when you find yourself having to justify your next move, or when you have to justify your lack of movement toward something God's called you to...

**Temptation will call into question the truths of God**

**Christ follower:** The truths of God about who you are...

- Guilt and shame...

The truths about who other people are...

The reality of your purpose and what it means to be a Jesus follower...

The Truths about who God is, His power, what you can experience through Him...

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<sup>2</sup> JD Greear, *The Strange Inauguration of The King of The World*

Something else:

### **Temptation presents itself through manipulation**

Let me show you what I mean... Look at how Satan tempts Jesus:

- He doesn't walk a scantily clad woman in front of Jesus...
- Doesn't offer Jesus a blunt or a hit of crack...

Satan doesn't tempt Jesus with inherently bad or sinful things... Satan uses good things and tempts Jesus to make them ultimate things that would result in Jesus **denouncing His trust in the Father, deviating from his purpose, and misusing His power** for personal gain and not the glory of God...

**He tempts Jesus with Bread...**

- Good thing, but it's not the ultimate thing- what matters more than bread is God... Needs being met fall second to God, not first... *Jesus will rest on God's sustenance and provision, given in God's own way.*<sup>3</sup> *He won't undermine that. **Jesus life is not about self-provision but about self-sacrifice!***

**He tempts Jesus with authority...**

- Authority for Jesus is a good thing for Jesus, and it's something that due to Him, but that authority doesn't come from Satan, it comes from God... Jesus' allegiance is to God alone

**He tempts Jesus with safety...**

- Safely isn't a bad thing, but this temptation is beckoning for Jesus to call God into question testing His care by intentionally putting Himself in a position where God has to take care of Him on His terms apart from God's plan... *The demanding of miraculous protection, where it is not needed, is not faith or loyalty. It is sin.*<sup>4</sup>

Satan took good things and manipulated them to position them as ultimate things...

The same is true for us... temptation will often come in the form of good things that we're tempted to make ultimate things...

- **Examples:**
  - Family, kids, job, success, money,

**Something else Satan does is that he uses the bible, he quotes Scripture AND HE MANIPULATES it as a temptation toward personal gain...**

- Satan knows the bible... The demons know truths about Jesus... They just rip it out of context or manipulate it toward religion...
  - **Joke** about Satan and the demons having church right now- bibles open, with one goal- to destroy Image Church...

Listen, bad theology sounds really good... if there's one thing the enemy loves, it's bad theology that takes you away from Jesus and the things of Jesus...

Another thing the enemy loves to use and manipulate you with is comfort...

**Piper points out that Satan would have done anything to keep Jesus from suffering** that *Satan's aim in the wilderness was to hinder Jesus from suffering. Because the suffering and death of Jesus meant the final destruction of Satan and the salvation of you and me.*<sup>5</sup>

Piper goes on to speak to **why we don't see more demonic activity in America...**

*He says:* Satan holds American Christianity so tightly in the vice-grip of comfort and wealth that he's not about to tip his hand with too much demonic foolery. What Satan fears most in this church is an outpouring of the Holy Spirit that causes us to say with Paul, "I count everything as refuse that I might gain Christ . . . that I might know the

<sup>3</sup> Bock, D. L. (1994). [Luke: 1:1-9:50](#) (Vol. 1, p. 374).

<sup>4</sup> Bock, D. L. (1994). [Luke: 1:1-9:50](#) (Vol. 1, pp. 381-382)..

<sup>5</sup> John Piper, *Christ in Combat: Defense by the Spirit*

power of his resurrection *and the fellowship of his sufferings*, becoming like him in his death.

I think that comfort is one of the most dangerous temptations...

A few other observations and then I want to leave you with a very practical application...

Understand that in light of who Jesus is and what He's done and who He's made you, that **you to are called to stand in the face of temptation**...

- Temptation from the enemy and from your flesh... Either way the application that we're going to land on today is the same...

We walk around with a well if I sin I will just repent mentality... Following Jesus means standing toe to toe with temptation and not just giving in a falling back on cheap grace...

Understand the severity of sin and what it cost Jesus...

Understand that you are a citizen of His Kingdom, you are an ambassador of God's Kingdom- this is a different way of living where Jesus rules your life... Where he is supreme- you embrace Him represent Him... You are his apprentice, you do as He does... not for salvation, but because of salvation...

Which is why passages like what we read today are so important, because it shows us how to be an apprentice of Jesus...

I want you to look at how Jesus responds...

***Jesus uses scripture as a tool***

- **But use it in the right way...**

Good, but it's not just about reciting the words, it's **not** a mystical chant- it's following with your heart the place scripture is pointing... which is Jesus...

Simply quoting scripture mechanically... ***Scripture should drive you to the truths of God...***

Why we have to be in it, not as an academic resource but as a source of life... *Flesh out... Get practical...*

## Conclusion [VAMP]

Temptation can drive us to Jesus...<sup>6</sup>

***When you fall to temptation remember the work of God***

- See the love of God
- Experience the grace and mercy of God...

Call... Some of you have been falling to temptation over and over again...

v. 17: **Jesus began to preach, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near."**

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<sup>6</sup> Tim Keller