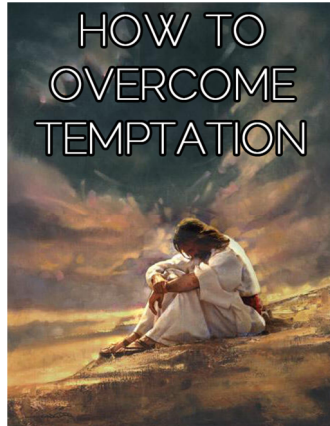


## Matthew 4:3-4 How to Overcome Temptation “The Lust of the Eyes”

6.14.15

Turn in your Bibles to Matthew, chapter 4. This morning we continue in our series: “How to Overcome Temptation.”



Last week we looked at “The Source and the Causes.” Today we will talk about “Lust of the Eyes,” next time we’ll talk about “The Lust of the Flesh.” We’re building on these messages, so I hope you’ll try your best to be here each week.

You will remember from our time last week that Jesus was led into the Judean wilderness by the Spirit of God for one final test before the start of His 3-year ministry. You will remember this map...



See the Dead Sea (bottom right). There is desert wilderness between the Dead Sea and the towns of Jericho and south and east of Bethany. This was a desolate area. Dry, barren...nothing there...



Only snakes, scorpions, and a few rabbits and birds. That's it and it's here that Matthew records...

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### **Matthew 4:1**

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

Remember the word "tempted" is **pie-rod-zo** and it can be translated:

#### **Definition for the Greek Word: Peirazo:**

#1 In a good sense, it is trial or test for the purpose of ascertaining the quality of something (used by God)

#2 In a bad sense, it is a temptation or enticement to sin that arises from lustful desires (used by Satan) (source: blueletterbible.org)

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It can be said this way:

God allows **tests** to our *faith* to grow us

Satan uses **temptations** to our *lust* to defeat us

From Satan's viewpoint He sought to tempt Jesus to go against **the Father**. But from God's perspective, **the Father** was going to allow the test to prove that Jesus was worthy to be the Savior of the world. God was allowing the test to prove the righteousness of His Son and complete His preparation for ministry. But, Satan sought to use this time in the wilderness to tempt Jesus and bring Him down.

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And Satan wants to do the same to us. Who is Satan?

Satan is described as tempter, the Diabolical one, the roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. Yet, we know Jesus has won the victory against the Enemy and this morning we are going to see the first of 3 temptations and we'll see how Jesus overcame Satan's temptation and how we can do the same.

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Understand this... when Satan tempts Jesus, he will tempt Him in 3 ways and Satan continues to tempt us in the exact, same three ways. The Apostle John describes these three ways:

### **1 John 2:16**

**16** For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.

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So, let's see those three ways Satan tempts us:

**How Satan Tempts:**

#1 The Lust of the Eyes

#2 The Lust of the Flesh

#3 The Pride of Life

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Today we are going to see: "The Lust of the Eyes." Look with me at verses 3 and 4.

**Matthew 4:3-4**

**3** And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." **4** But he answered, "It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

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Let me go ahead and say this and get this out of the way. I know Jesus had been fasting for 40 days, but this temptation of Satan IS NOT ABOUT HUNGER. This temptation is about the authority of God's Word. And that's what this message is all about. Will we trust God's Word? That's the theme of this temptation and it's the assault on God's Word that is before us today.

Satan comes face to face before Jesus in that Judean wilderness and he says, "Hey Jesus IF, you are the Son of God turn these stones into bread." IF... Some translators translate the word "If" as "since" you are the Son of God. Either way works because what Satan is doing is he is trying to **create doubt with questioning sarcasm.** "If" or "since" you are the Son of God, turn these stones into bread?!?"

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Now understand this...It's obvious that Satan knows who Jesus is. He knows He IS the Son of God, but he's taunting Him. He's trying to bait Him. He's saying "I dare you to turn these stones into bread!"

Now think with me. Satan used this very same tactic with Eve in the Garden Eden. Remember? He used the same "if," the same sort of "questioning" sort of statement seeking to cause Eve to doubt God's word. Do you remember?

**Genesis 3:1**

**Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"**

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You see, Satan was trying to plant doubt in Eve's mind. In fact, Satan lied. God didn't say that Adam and Eve couldn't eat of ANY tree in the garden. He said, you can't eat of just one tree. See, Satan is always twisting things with just enough truth mixed with his lies to make it seem okay. What Satan always wants to do is to get between us and the Father...that's his aim...goal.

You see, what the Devil wants to do is to make us think that God is somehow holding out on us and not giving us what we deserve. For Jesus it was bread. For Eve it was this ONE fruit. So, Satan plays it to make God look unloving, unkind and unfaithful. Satan seeks to shake our faith and confidence in God and in His Word.

Matthew Henry says:

**"Outward afflictions, needs and burdens are the great arguments Satan uses to make the people of God question God."** Bible Scholar, *Matthew Henry*

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Adam and Eve fell to sin with the issue of food. They blew it with the forbidden fruit, but Jesus didn't. He wouldn't fail in the issue of food. The first Adam blew it with the fruit, but the Last Adam (as Jesus is called), He's not going to blow it with bread. The first Adam didn't last very long living by the Word of God, trusting in the Word of God, but Jesus did.

Jesus' mission...His task was to fulfill the original destiny and purpose of the human race: to live on the basis and trust upon every single word that comes from the mouth of God can be depended on without question. And what is that compared to a piece of fruit or a piece of bread?

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Jesus would eventually tell His disciples as recorded in...

**John 4:32-34**

**32** But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." **33** So the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought him something to eat?" **34** Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.

Food won't keep you alive. It's God who keeps you alive and allows you to live. You could get hit by a truck today with a full belly. It's God who allows you to live and it's He who will provide for you.

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So, Satan says, "Jesus...prove you are the Son of God. There's a pile of rocks lying in front of you...make it happen. Turn 'em into bread!" By the way...we see that Satan knows Jesus is God, because only God could stone into bread. No man can do that. No human being can do that. Only the God/Man could do that. Even Satan knew that Jesus was God in the flesh.

Satan says, "Prove you are THE SON OF GOD." Well, folks those were the last words that Jesus had ringing in his ears as walked into that wilderness desert. Remember?



When Jesus came up out of the water at His baptism, God said, "This IS my beloved Son in whom I'm well pleased."

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Do you know what Satan was trying to do by asking this sarcastic question? He was saying, Look Jesus...just look around at where you're at...you are in this dry, desolate, forsaken place...come on, if you are the Son of God, so high and mighty, then why are you going through this? Why all of this indignity? Why are you hungry? Why are you alone? Is this any way that a good Father treats His Son?

Come on Jesus, you are too dignified to go through this. Grab a little of the authority that's yours. Come on! You've been through enough. You were born in stinking cattle trough in a nasty stable for Pete's sake. You've lived in total obscurity in Nazareth for 30 years. You've been sweating and

eking out a living as a carpenter. Haven't you suffered enough indignity? You shouldn't be suffering like this. Turn those stones into bread!

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After all... What's wrong with eating? What's wrong with breaking the fast. BREAKFAST.

Come on...how is turning stone into bread a sin. Well, it's not a sin...but, it's the motive behind the act. See. It's the motive. Remember this is more than just a temptation of the flesh. Satan is wanting Jesus to excuse and rationalize His behavior.

Satan wants Jesus to break the fast on his own terms and not God's terms. Folks, that's what "The Lust of the Eyes" is all about. We get impatient with God and Satan pushes us to think we owe it to ourselves to have what we want RIGHT NOW! Get what you want! Get it now! Get your needs met! Don't wait till you get married to be intimate...after all...you love each. Don't study for the test...after all...you're busy...just cheat. Go ahead...hold a grudge...they don't deserve your friendship anyway. Go ahead, click on the picture...you deserve it. Satisfaction for the moment!

Do you see what Satan does? Satan was trying to get Jesus to rationalize and justify turning stones into bread. After all Jesus, what would become of God's plan for the world if You died out here because you starved to death? Come one what's the big deal?

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How did Jesus respond to all of this rationalization?

#### **Matthew 4:4**

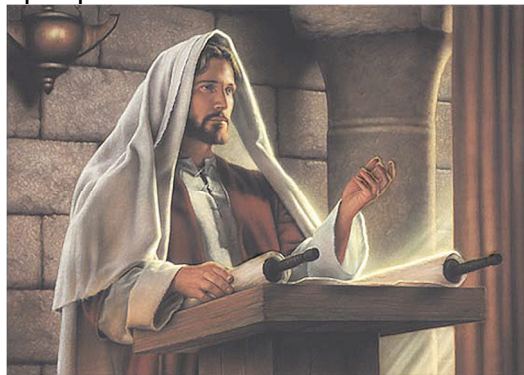
**4** But he answered, "It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

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"IT IS WRITTEN."

BTW...That's how Jesus would respond to every single temptation. "It is written." He would speak nothing of His own thoughts. He would not argue with Satan. He would simply quote Scripture. Unlike Adam and unlike Eve, Jesus trusted the Word of His Father.

Jesus said, "It is written." That phrase literally means, "The Scripture says." The first century people were very familiar with this phrase. Every time a Synagogue Ruler would take the Scriptures and stand before the people to read from the scrolls...



He would always begin, "It is written." That meant, "Listen up...this is the Word of God that's going to be spoken to you."

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And that's what Jesus said. He quoted God's word. Jesus quotes from Deut. 8 where Moses was

telling the children of God who were (get this), wandering around in the wilderness (sound familiar) that they needed to trust in God's word.

### **Deuteronomy 8:2-3**

**2** And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. **3** And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

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Listen, God's word is our food. It's better than bread. You are better off to obey God and depend on Him and wait on His provision than to try to grab some premature satisfaction just because Satan tells you that you deserve it and you've waited long enough. Watch out...those are lies from Satan!

Do you understand what's happening here? Satan wants to create doubt in the word of God. He did it with Adam and Eve, and he's still doing it today.

There is an attack on the Word of God today in our culture that's unbelievable. We've gone from being a nation founded on the principles of Scripture to being a country where if you say you believe in the Bible, you're branded a fool, a bigot, a hater and unintelligent. There is an all-out assault to minimize and water down the Word of God.

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Yet, nothing has changed. The Word of God is our bread. The Word of God is our life and our foundation. In fact the Word of God is Jesus.

### **John 1:1**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Jesus is the Word! When you trust in the Bible, you are trusting in Jesus. And when you trust in Jesus, you are trusting in His Word.

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Folks listen, we can be confident in this book. There have been over 24,000 archeological digs in the land of Israel and not one artifact, not one name, date, place, person or event has ever been disproved in the Bible. We have over 6,000 manuscript copies of the NT. We have the Dead Sea Scrolls. We have over 300 OT prophecies that were fulfilled in Jesus alone. Folks, this is God's Word. It is the divinely inspired, protected, powerful Word of God. It is supernatural and it is alive.

### **Hebrews 4:12**

**12** For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

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It's our sword, it's our weapon. It's our hope. It is Jesus Christ, in black and white. The Word of God changes lives and you've seen that. It changed my life because it revealed Jesus to me.

### **Psalms 119:105**

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

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It's God's word that we must trust in today....

But, understand what's happening today. Understand that Satan has brought us into a wilderness as a nation and he's bringing doubt and questioning about the Word of God. Once again, he is challenging the Word of God.

You know what Satan has been doing for the last 50 years in this country? He's been trying to get us to distrust the Word of God... To drink the Kool-Aid and it started in the 1960's. Let me show you.

**1962** | What you see pictured here—children praying in a classroom—will rarely be seen again after 1962, when the Supreme Court rules that school-sponsored prayer in public schools violates the First Amendment [*Engel v. Vitale*].

1 of 10

**1973** | Women are given the constitutional right to have an abortion [*Roe v. Wade*]. This ruling will play a huge role in cultivating a political climate hostile to Christian values.

2 of 10

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**1980** | The Supreme Court rules that a picture of the Ten Commandments hanging in a public school violates the First Amendment's "establishment clause," which prohibits the government from preferring one religion over another [*Stone v. Graham*]. Over time the Ten Commandments disappear from public spaces.

3 of 10

**2010** | The Affordable Care Act is passed, mandating all companies to provide their employees with any form of contraception, including forms known to be abortive. Some companies—like Hobby Lobby, whose owners are evangelical—must either compromise their morals or pay enormous fines for not complying.

4 of 10

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**2011** | The California State University system "derecognizes" InterVarsity Christian Fellowship as a student group, revoking all benefits afforded to recognized student groups. Practically speaking, this means an estimated \$20,000 loss to each chapter in yearly operating costs and a harder time reaching students.

5 of 10

**2012** | Chick-fil-A takes heat when its president affirms the Biblical view of marriage. Chicago mayor Rahm Emanuel vows to block its plans for a new Chicago store, saying, "Chick-fil-A values are not Chicago values. They disrespect our fellow neighbors and residents. It would be a bad investment, since it would be empty."

6 of 10

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**2013** | The Supreme Court strikes down Section 3 the Defense of Marriage ACT (DOMA). Now any same-sex marriage made legal by a state must be recognized as legal by the federal government. [*United States v. Windsor*]. As with *Roe v. Wade*, this ruling cultivates a political climate hostile to Christian values.

7 of 10

**2014 (March)** | A cadet at the United States Air Force Academy starts a firestorm when he writes a

Bible verse on the whiteboard outside his room. Complaints are lodged against him for elevating his faith above others, and he is ordered to erase the verse.

8 of 10

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**2014 (July)** | President Obama's executive order forbids federal contractors from discriminating against employees on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Thus any religious organization with federal contracts cannot make employees meet faith-based requirements, compromising the organization's spiritual integrity.

9 of 10

**2014 (October)** | The Houston city government orders five area pastors to turn over any sermons, emails, and text messages about homosexuality, gender issues, or Houston mayor Annise Parker. (Parker later rescinded her order.)

10 of 10

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What now?

Now we wait for the other shoe to drop at the end of this month with the Supreme Court's ruling on making "gay marriage" normal and accepted as a nation.

But, I agree with what Franklin Graham said:

**"...while I believe millions of Americans share my views on this matter and my beliefs about same-sex marriage, I also realize, based on polls and trends (and the pending Supreme Court decision), I might soon find myself in the minority. Even so, my position is not based upon polls or trends, political winds or Supreme Court wisdom. It is based upon God's word, the Holy Bible, written more than 2000 years ago, and that document is not subject to amendment or revision." --Franklin Graham**

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Oh church family, this country has taken the bait. It's happening right before our eyes. We are no longer trusting in the Word of God...every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

Listen carefully, in 1980 only 24% of Americans believed homosexuality was acceptable. Today it is 68%. Satan is pumping progressive relativism down our throats and we're drinking the Kool Aid. Satan has deceived people, (including many Christians) that the Bible is no longer reliable or accurate...that it's just a book of fairy tales and myths. Now they are saying that Adam and Eve didn't really exist. Noah's ark and Jonah and the great fish are just cute little allegories. No the Bible, they say, is always open to the interpretation of the "culture of that day."

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We're told to "get with the times." We're told that God's Word must change with the culture to stay relevant. And you now what...that's actually evolutionary thinking. It's the understanding that somehow today we're actually smarter and wiser than scholars of old such as: Augustine, Calvin, Knox, Edwards, Spurgeon, Finney, Lewis and Tozer. Now, today, you can be 25-years old and write a book claiming that Paul in Romans 1 meant that homosexuality is only wrong if the homosexual steps outside of a monogamous relationship. Really??? That understanding goes against centuries of proper Biblical understanding and proper Bible hermeneutics. Yet, somehow we think we're smarter than God today. We no longer trust His Word. Did God say?

Where has thinking come from? Satan, of course. He's the Diabolical One. The Slanderer. The



## Deceiver. The Tempter. The Roaring Lion.

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But, church family, understand this... the Bible has not change. And God has not changed. God and His Word are constant and unchanging. They are the same yesterday, today and forever. The Word of God is just as applicable today and for our culture than as was when it was written. Because God is not dumb. He stands outside of time as the Alpha and the Omega. He is the beginning and the end and He does not change with the culture, nor does His divine Word.

Listen, Satan is cramming down our throats a viewpoint in our society today that there is no sin, there is no right and wrong, and thus there is no need for confession or repentance of anything. In our culture, Satan has convinced us that every lifestyle is acceptable and we should all embrace those lifestyles in order to show love. In fact, to do otherwise is now considered "judgmental," "bigoted," "closed-minded" and "unkind."

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Yet, I tell you today, standing on the firm foundation of Jesus Christ and His Word: This brand of "so-called Christianity" is nothing more than idolatry. This brand of "Christianity" espouses "social justice" and "good works" as its method of salvation. Just feed the poor, put clothes on the homeless, be the "Good Samaritan" and embrace all lifestyles, but don't you dare tell someone that they need Jesus and offer the Good News that Jesus saves us from our SINS. Oh no...that would be hate speech. We're better than that today. We're more evolved.

So, we keep drinking the Kool-Aid and we feed the poor, cloth the homeless, save the whales, save the climate from Global Warming and people still go to Hell because they've never been told the bad news so that they can receive the good news. The bad news: we are all sinners in need of a Savior. The Good News...Jesus died to provide us with salvation IF we will repent of our sins and call on His name. IF we will identify with Jesus first and not our lifestyle first. IF we will deny ourselves and take up our crosses daily. For there is no other way and no other name under heaven by which man can be saved than surrendering to the name and the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. And that is the truth of God's Word! So, I say to Satan today: It is written: **Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.**"

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The lesson in this temptation of Jesus is a beautiful, simple one. Live life in God's time, in God's way, trusting in God's word and He'll supply your needs. Paul said it best:

### **Philippians 4:19-20**

**19** And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

**20** To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

And Jesus can only promise that because he didn't take the bait. He didn't succumb to the lust of the Eyes. Instead He trusted in God's Word. Oh may we do the same!