

**SERMON: OVERCOME TEMPTATIONS**  
**MATTHEW 4:1-11**

**Big Idea: TEMPTATION IS ONLY TEMPTATION WHEN WE CHOOSE NOT TO TRUST WHO GOD IS AND WHAT GOD HAS SAID.**

**Temptation:** enticed or allured to do something, good or bad.

What does it mean to overcome? To overcome is **to succeed** in dealing with a problem or difficulty. To overcome is to **defeat or prevail**. To biblical term used in this passage today is the term *nikao*. It means to overcome, **overpower, triumph or be victorious**. **It rests on the fact that God makes believers His children and that through faith in His promise it makes men victorious.** 1 John 2:13-14 “you have overcome the evil one”.

Is there anybody in this place today who is tired of living defeated and wants to walk in victory? Is there anybody in this place today who is tired of being overcome and wants to live as an “Overcomer”? If so, tune in to the words of Scripture.

*1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil. 2 For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry. 3 During that time the devil came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread.” 4 But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” [Deuteronomy 8:3] 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city, Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, 6 and said, “If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, ‘He will order his angels to protect you. And they will hold you up with their hands so you won’t even hurt your foot on a stone.’” [Psalm 91:11-12] 7 Jesus responded, “The Scriptures also say, ‘You must not test the Lord your God.’” [Deuteronomy 6:15] 8 Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 “I will give it all to you,” he said, “if you will kneel down and worship me.” 10 “Get out of here, Satan,” Jesus told him. “For the Scriptures say, ‘You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’” [Deuteronomy 6:13] 11 Then the devil went away, and angels came and took care of Jesus.*

**OBSERVATIONS:**

1. The wilderness encounter recorded in Matthew 4 occurs at a significant time in the life and ministry of Jesus.
2. God is fully aware of this wilderness experience prior to the experience.
3. The wilderness is on Jesus’ itinerary.
4. Jesus’ wilderness encounter is a private encounter that has public implications.
5. Jesus’ response to each temptation speaks truth to confront the lie of the devil.

**WHAT ARE THE LIES REVEALED IN THIS PASSAGE?**

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40 days and 40 nights-40 would remind the hearers of wilderness wandering. Or it may remind them of Moses on the mountain of Sinai. It may remind them Jesus is hungry and all around him are small rocks that look like loaves of bread. He had the power to do something about it, but he doesn't.

1. **YOU HAVE TO MAKE THINGS HAPPEN FOR YOU.** Because if you don't make it happen it won't happen.

**Matthew 4:3-4**

*3During that time the devil came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread."*

**THE TEMPTATION TO PUT OUR PLEASURE OVER GOD'S PURPOSE FOR OUR LIVES.** *He was led into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit and fasted and prayed. Stop taking His cue from God and start doing things His way.*

*4But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" [Deuteronomy 8:3]*

Now, the source of that visible bread told them with the authority of forty years of performance that His word is spiritual food, which is equally vital to life as the physical food He had supplied for the past forty years. The manna **symbolized more than mere physical nourishment but the word of God itself (Exodus 16:4), for the God who could provide in such a mighty and unexpected way was well worth listening to.**

2. **A GOD WHO WON'T DO WHAT YOU NEED HIM TO DO WHEN YOU NEED HIM TO DO IT, CAN'T BE TRUSTED.**

**Matthew 4:5-7** *5Then the devil took him to the holy city, Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, 6and said, "If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, 'He will order his angels to protect you. And they will hold you up with their hands so you won't even hurt your foot on a stone.'" [Psalm 91:11-12]*

*7Jesus responded, "The Scriptures also say, 'You must not test the Lord your God.'" [Deuteronomy 6:15]*

Satan quotes Scripture. This is a 400 foot jump. **The quoting of Scripture is not wrong, but the application of the Scripture is wrong.** The devil makes the mistake of confusing the psalmist's stumbling so as to fall with Jesus' deliberately jumping off. Stumbling and intentionally jumping or not the same. The devil was requesting that

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Jesus manufacture a situation that would force God to act in a certain way. A demand for the miraculous is not acceptable. The goal is not to deliberately put our lives in danger to challenge God to demonstrate how powerful He is. **THE TEMPTATION IS TO MANIPULATE GOD FOR OUR PURPOSES. FAITH DOESN'T NEED TO SEE TO BELIEVE.**

Jesus responds by sharing that we should not put God to the test. Israel was without water in Exodus 17 and questioned whether or not God was among them (17:7). They wanted evidence of God's presence.

We presume to know a better way than God's way for our lives. We waste money or misuse money by shopping or splurging to buy things we know we don't have the money to buy and then we ask God to provide or cover up our mismanagement. We ask God to give us a job after we quit our old job and gave everyone a piece of our mind on our way out the door. We didn't pray about leaving the previous job and wait on His direction, but instead took action on our own and now we are frustrated with God because He hasn't open a door for a job. We drive 15 miles over the speed limit knowing that we are already on one or two tickets, and when we are stopped by the police, we pray to God that the police wouldn't give us a ticket.

**3. GOD'S WAY IS NOT THE ONLY WAY TO GET WHAT YOU WANT/NEED.**

**Matthew 4:8-10**

*8Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9"I will give it all to you," he said, "if you will kneel down and worship me."*

*10"Get out of here, Satan," Jesus told him. "For the Scriptures say, 'You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.'" [Deuteronomy 6:13]*

Just bow down and worship. Just ascribe your devotion and submission to the devil and all that you want will be given to you. Make a deal with the devil. **THE TEMPTATION IS TO TAKE SHORTCUTS TO ACHIEVE OUR PURPOSE.**

Satan offers Jesus to be the King and reign without the cross. Just bow and you can have your rule.

Temptation to get the crown without the cross. Microwave life and moment. Quick money. Quick success. No one wants to go through the process-the process refines us and makes us who we need to be.

Jesus says get way from here "Satan" or adversary-one opposed to God. Worship and service belongs only to God. I'll take the Father's path to get gain the crown.

**LESSONS TO HELP US OVERCOME:**

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1. **Expect** temptation.

We will never reach a point in life when we are not tempted. Being tempted is not a reflection of my spiritual maturity or lack of spiritual maturity. It's just a temptation. Also the temptations that we face are not unique to us. Write this down or copy and paste.

**1 Corinthians 10:13** “**13No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he'll never let you be pushed past your limit; he'll always be there to help you come through it.**” **The Message**

2. **Trust** that God knows your **location** and **situation**. **Psalm 139:7-12**

God doesn't need the find my friends app because HE always knows where we are. God who knows where we are also knows our situation. God knows the specifics of what we face and the nuances. God is with us and knows all the smells, taste, colors, metrics, etc.

3. **Resist** the devil by appealing to the written and living Word (Jesus).

**James 4:7-10**

**“So let God work his will in you. Yell a loud no to the Devil and watch him scamper. Say a quiet yes to God and he'll be there in no time. Quit dabbling in sin. Purify your inner life. Quit playing the field. Hit bottom, and cry your eyes out. The fun and games are over. Get serious, really serious. Get down on your knees before the Master; it's the only way you'll get on your feet.”** **The Message**

4. **Commit** to God's way.

**James 1:12-15**

**12God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. 13And remember, when you are being tempted, do not say, “God is tempting me.” God is never tempted to do wrong, and he never tempts anyone else. 14Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. 15These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death. NLT**

**Temptation is not a sin. We sin when we choose to yield to temptation.** We can exercise our will to choose to give into the temptation or reject the temptation.

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:**

1. What are the similarities between Genesis 3:1-10; Matthew 4:1-11 and 1 John 2:16?
2. What are the similarities and differences in the wilderness experience referenced in Deuteronomy and Matthew 4?

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS:**

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1. When was your last wilderness experience?
2. What were the lies the enemy attempted to get you to believe?
3. What are some lessons you learned from your last wilderness experience?