Shortcuts to Significance — Delivery Transcript

Matthew 4:1–11 (CSB) · Wes Terry · Sunday, January 18, 2026 · *Straight Paths*

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If you have your Bible, we're going to be in Matthew chapter 4. Matthew chapter 4. And as you're turning there, if you're new to Broadview, we typically preach through books of the Bible. And right now we're preaching through the book of Matthew because we're exploring the life of Jesus Christ in our culture. It seems that people are becoming more spiritually interested and asking spiritual questions again and a little bit dissatisfied with the answers that our secular whatever you want to call it, secular humanism, progressivism culture has put forward and interested to see what this ancient ancient tradition of Christianity has to say.

So we're going to the horse's mouth as it were, looking at the words of Jesus himself, looking at the eyewitness testimony from Matthew and Mark. Or not Matthew and Mark, just from Matthew to be honest, but also Mark and Luke and John the other gospel writers and exploring what this person who this person was, what he came to do and why that still matters today. We find ourselves this morning in Matthew chapter 4, which is the temptation of Jesus. And as you're turning there, I want you to ask yourself the question, why is it that you've never met a human who didn't want their life to matter?

Unless you have. Have you ever met a human that didn't want their life to matter? Maybe their life didn't matter, and they were upset about it, but they at least have a longing. For their life to mean something. For I never met a parent who didn't want their child to have some kind of success or some kind of significance in their life I think it's hardwired into the human condition. We're born out of the gate with this longing for significance. And it's part of, I think, God's design. We were born different.

We were created different. Than the rest of the created world, all the other animals, no other animal has reasoning capacities like we do. You never see a monkey down on his knees in prayer to God, having an existential crisis, right? It's just banana good, no banana bad You never see you never see humans, you know humans have relationships like other animals don't have. Not to say that animals don't have relationships, but they certainly do. But they

don't have the type of relationships that we do. Certainly don't have the kind of drama and relationship problems that we sometimes come up with in our relationships.

But even if they were similarities there's certainly no animals that carry the kind of responsibilities that we do. This innate longing that human beings have to take dominion. To create culture, to kind of be the apex predator, the chief of the mountain, and to subjugate the created world so that it bends to our will and does what we want it to do. And that was hardwired from God. We were unlike all the other animals created in what's called the Imago Dei. It's the Latin term that means the image of God.

God breathed the breath of life into us so that we reflect Him. We kind of share his attributes in our capacity to create and to reason and relate and have a responsibility to do things in the world. The problem is that that capacity was undermined or corrupted, you might say, through the introduction of brokenness into our world. And Genesis 3 talks about this in terms of Adam and Eve sinning against God. That sin brought a curse on the ground, and now the ground, the created world, it frustrates the toil of man, so that it's only through the sweat of your brow that you achieve things.

There's a complexity and brokenness in our relationships because of sin entering into the world between man and woman, husband and wife. There is frustration at various different levels so that our capacity and a calling to do these things of significance is frustrated and diminished because of brokenness and sin. And that is what causes a lot of people in our world today to take shortcuts, to get to where we want to go a little bit faster, a little bit easier without as much risk because it I can avoid the brokenness. I can avoid the suffering and the difficulty.

And shortcuts are great sometimes. Sometimes shortcuts work out wonderful, but sometimes shortcuts aren't so wonderful. Have you have you ever been taking a road trip somewhere? And Apple Maps or Google Maps will give you a little alert and they'll say, traffic ahead, save ten minutes by taking this route. Has anyone ever seen that before on their Apple Maps? And then has anyone ever taken the alternate route only later to really regret it? Has anyone ever done that before? There have been times when I've taken the alternate route and I would have rather driven in a ditch than to go the way that it was wanting me to go.

It did not save me time. It cost me time. It cost me sanity. Cost me love in my marriage. It cost me all sci all kinds of things because of the hardships and difficulty that that it created. And that's the way shortcuts sometimes work. Sometimes shortcuts can cost you more than what they promised to deliver. And that's certainly the case of spiritual shortcuts that you might call temptation or sin. And that's what we're looking at this morning in Matthew chapter 4. We're looking at the temptations of Jesus. His temptation to take a shortcut on what God had called him to do.

Follows his baptism, which if you're not tracking with us, if this is your first Sunday, in Matthew chapter 3, Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist. And for Jesus and John, and really everybody who saw it was a big, big deal because a voice came from heaven that spoke over Jesus that said, this is my son. Now that sounds nice to you and me, but if you were steeped in Old Testament prophecy and background, this is basically God's way of saying to John and everybody listening Jesus is the Christ. Jesus is the Messiah.

He's the promised king who would rule over the nations. He's going to deliver God's people and make everything good again. And so for Jesus, you got to imagine if you were Jesus, this is this is a big deal for you. Finally, I understand who I am, I understand my calling in life, I understand why I'm so different from everybody else. The stuff my mom has been saying is be beginning to make sense now. Now I understand why like Joseph wasn't my dad but he is my father. I all of it's coming into to focus for Jesus and for John it was like everything God has sent me to do to prepare the way for the coming of Messiah.

Now that makes sense. Now I know who the lamb of God is who takes away the sin of the world. It was a big aha moment. But right after that moment, God sends Jesus into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit to be tempted by the devil. To test him to see if he really is the kind of man who can carry out the calling that God had put on his life. And a lot of people in our culture, they don't believe in devils, they don't believe in demons, they don't believe in spiritual evil.

We live in a very materialistic, naturalistic culture because of the reigning ideologies that have kind of taken root in academia and the intellectual institutions of our world. But if you're going to adopt the worldview of Jesus, then you can't but believe in spiritual evil. Jesus believed in Satan. Jesus believed in demons. That's a very biblical idea. And honestly, I don't know how you can live in our world and see some of the things that we see. And not believe in some kind of spiritual evil, some kind of big principality at work, some dark force that moves things in certain directions so that it brings about chaos.

And destruction and death. Certainly the last twentieth century I think was the bloodiest century in human history because of the satanic evils that moved certain political leaders to do what they did and it's still true today. And so Satan is going to tempt Jesus. And the thing about this text is the temptations that Jesus faces are really a blueprint, I think, for us in two ways. Number one, for understanding how temptation works. Understanding how evil tries to influence us to take those shortcuts in our own life, but it also gives us a beautiful demonstration of how Jesus saves us from temptation and overcoming it himself.

And so let's pick it up chapter four, starting in verse one. Then Jesus, or sorry, just look at verse 17. The voice comes from heaven. Chapter 3, verse 17. This is right before chapter 4 starts. This is Jesus comes out of the water, the heavens are rent, Spirit of God descends like a dove. Comes down on Jesus and a voice from heaven said, this is my beloved Son with

whom I am well pleased. Then Jesus, then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

After he had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was hungry. No joke. Then the tempter approached him and said, if you are the son of God, notice he's tempting what God just said. If you are the son of God, then tell these stones to become bread. And Jesus answered, it's written, man must not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. And then the devil took him to the holy city, that's Jerusalem, and he had him stand on the pinnacle of the Jewish temple.

And he said to Jesus, If you're the Son of God, then throw yourself down, for it's written, God will give his angels orders concerning you, and they'll support you with their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. That's a quotation of Psalm 91 that's in the Old Testament. Jesus said back to Satan, it's also written, do not test the Lord your God. And then again the devil took Jesus up to a high mountain, probably in a vision of some sort, and he showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.

And he said to him, I will give you all of these if you'll just fall down and worship me. Notice the mask is off. It's just a clear call for Jesus to worship Satan instead of God the Father. And Jesus told him, go Away, Satan. For it's written, worship the Lord your God and serve him only, or serve only Him. And then the devil left him, and the angels came and began to serve him. Now people have studied these temptations for centuries. The early church has wrestled with how Jesus could be tempted if God never tempts anyone with evil and God is not tempted by evil and Jesus is truly God then how can Jesus be tempted?

That is that's a mystery for another day the reality, though, is that Jesus in his humanity was tempted in every way that we are. We saw this last week in Hebrews 4. 15, the early church believe the biblical witness that Jesus faced temptation just like you and I face temptation and he faces all sorts of temptation. In this passage there's three different types. You might say there's a lust of the flesh or a desire to satisfy physical longing, there's a desire to have control and safety in the second temptation, and then there's a desire to have supremacy or greatness in that third temptation.

And the response of Jesus is different in all three cases. But I don't think the differences are as important as the similarities. There's one similarity that all three temptations have and one similarity that every response Jesus gives shares in common. And that temptation is essentially to not believe the Lord, to trust in the flesh instead of trusting in the Lord to do it your way instead of God's way. You might call that idolatry, you can call that unbelief, you can call that whatever you want to call it, but it's at the root.

Of everything Jesus faces. And that's why the devil at the end in that third temptation says, just fall down and worship me. Because every temptation at root is essentially that. Do this

my way. Do this your way. Don't do it God's way. Don't listen to the Father. They're all distractions and temptations to avoid his ultimate purpose, which was to go to the cross. And so what I want us to do is to try to understand the nature of temptation. If that's at root what it is, in your notes, the way I'm going to phrase it.

Every spiritual shortcut is a shrine. I know that's a weird statement, but just go with it for a moment. A shrine is a building in which you offer worship to a God, right? You have all kinds of shrines all over the world. People erect shrines to worship all sorts of things. And spiritually speaking, when you take a shortcut in life, it is as if you are offering a sacrifice to a type of a God in a type of a shrine. And what I mean by that is they're all promising some kind of deliverance.

Every shortcut promises to deliver a certain good. And I don't think they deliver it on the good the way that they say they do, but essentially you're acting in faith, believing that promise, and compromising what you believe is true or good in order to obtain it. And so every shortcut is a shrine. It's a it's an act of idolatry and unbelief. And Jesus resists that those three temptations in three different ways. And so let's let's look at them one by one. Let's begin in chapter four, verse one. I just want to note a couple of things in the context.

The first is this temporal marker in verse one which says then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness. The word then is important because it's on the heels of his baptism. You might say the baptism of Jesus was his high mark. As as a as a as a as a son of God. It was it was like it would be like your wedding day. It's so special. It's so monumental. Everybody witnesses, the love that the two of you have for each other. It marks, it kind of sets the trajectory for the rest of your married life.

Similarly for Jesus, this baptism marked the trajectory of his ministry. It was a high water mark. It was a day of focus and clarity. And it was after that baptism that the tempter comes to him, which is a reminder when it comes to temptation. There are no safe seasons. There are no times in your life where you're immune from temptation. You know, just because you really, really, really, really love your spouse doesn't mean you'll never be tempted. To betray them or to be unfaithful. Just because you really love your kids doesn't mean you won't be tempted to get really angry with them.

Just because you're really rich doesn't mean you won't be tempted to steal or to cheat. There is no a time in your life where you're immune from temptation. In fact, usually the closer you are to doing what God wants, the more significant the event when it comes to God doing something special. The more special the work that God is doing, the more likely the temptation will come from the enemy. That's just the way the enemy works. God creates, Satan counterfeits. God moves and Satan offers counter-moves and counteroffenses. It's been like that from the very beginning, all the way back in Genesis.

Anywhere God is working, Satan is not far behind. And so if you're being obedient to the will of God in your life, you're trying to do something important and special, then it won't be long before you face resistance from the enemy. In fact, if you never are tempted by the enemy, it's probably a sign you're going the same direction, as somebody once said. So I think there it could strike at any season. The second thing that's interesting is he's led up by the Spirit. He's led up by the Spirit into the wilderness.

To be tempted by the devil. The spirit there is talking about the Holy Spirit. And this word translated led up, it's pretty violent of a word. That's a soft translation by the CSB. It means to be driven. It means to be cast out. The idea is that Jesus was not wandering around, kind of just doing his own thing, and happened to find himself in the wilderness. Nobody would do that anyway, right? He's not like he's camping in Yellowstone National Park. This is this is the this is the wilderness. This is a desol the word means devastation.

This is the area if you look on this map, the Judean wilderness, it's right next to the dead Sea. When we went to Israel, we went all these places, but we were in Jerusalem and we drove through this road that went through the wilderness, went through the Judean wilderness. It is sparse, there is no vegetation, it is dry, it looks like death. Sand and death. And that's where Jesus is spending forty days and forty nights not eating or no, he was probably drinking something, but he's not eating any any food.

Why did he do that? Because God led him there why did God lead him there? That's an interesting question. If you look at what Matthew's doing in his gospel, what you kind of notice is that Matthew is showing how Jesus retraces the steps of Old Testament Israel. Old Testament Israel also came out of the water into the wilderness to be tested for 40 years. Old Testament Israel faced a very similar kind of dynamic that Jesus is facing in this temptation, but they're not the only ones You remember Abraham, when he was Abram in Genesis chapter 12, he faced famine and had to sojourn into the wilderness on the way to Egypt.

Abraham had to have a wilderness season in his life where God created clarity of focus and strength and life from seeming death. You see the same thing with David, King David, before he becomes king of Israel. He is hiding from Saul in the wilderness region, the same exact region as God prepares him to be king. The reality is God will often use the wilderness in your life. He will sovereignly use difficult times, dry times, times of hardship and seeming death to create new life and to create clarity and to create focus and spiritual strength.

And that's why God, it's one reason why God may be leading him into the wilderness. The reality though is that he's sovereign over this process. He's not the source of the temptation. Not once does Matthew say God tempted Satan or God tempted Jesus. He says God led Jesus to be tempted by who? The devil. The Bible is very clear that God doesn't tempt anyone with evil. God is not tempted by evil. This idea that God is so sovereign that he

causes evil in the world. I do not I don't think that's a that's a biblical portrait of the sovereignty of God.

Certainly he allows evil, it's within his sovereign plan. And he controls and causes many things in bringing his will to fruition, but he does not create the temptation in the life of Jesus that comes from the enemy. And the same is true for you God, it may be in obedience to God's will for your life that you experience temptation from the enemy. Just because you're having a difficult time, just because you feel like you're disconnected or feeling attacked doesn't mean you're not right where you need to be, right within the sovereign will of God for your life.

God is sovereign, he's not the source. Then the last thing I want to point out in verse one is he's tempted by the devil, look at verse two, after he had fasted forty days and forty nights. After he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. That's an obvious point. And then the tempter approached him and said, if you're the Son of God. Satan is always strategic in when he brings temptation. He knows you better than you know yourself. He knows when to strike, he knows how to strike, he knows what to say.

Notice he attacks God he attacks Jesus at the level of God's clear of affirmation. God says, you're my son, and Satan says, are you really? God says, this is who you're who you're meant to be, this is what you're meant to do, and Satan says, is it have to look that way? God will always put a question mark. I mean sorry, Satan will always put a question mark where the Lord puts a period in your life, and that's what you see Satan do us here. And he waits until Jesus is hungry.

He's he's been fasting for forty days and forty nights. Jesus was not tempted in s in like we are, in that he had some bad things he did in his childhood, you know, he was his rebellious years, as we might say, as a prodigal, playing the prodigal like I certainly did. So there's temptations I face today because of those sinful choices I made in the past. Jesus didn't have any of those things, but what Jesus did suffer was mortality. He was truly human, which means He got tired. He had to sleep.

He had to use the bathroom. He had to take a nap. He after 40 days would have been physically compromised. And he's also being tempted in a spiritual way to un to disbelieve the Lord And Satan waits until that physical comprom that that physical weakness is there before he strikes with the spiritual temptation. And the same is true for you and for me. Okay, so those are the context. That's always true of all temptation. Of all times for you and for me. It'll happen at any season. God is sovereign. He's not the cause.

And Satan is very strategic in how he strikes. What about the temptation itself? And I want you to notice three things about the temptation. Temptation always begins with a legitimate need. Usually it's something not bad, usually it's something good. Sometimes it's something

God has has gifted you with, something God has called you to. The need is always legit. But then there's also a pressing lie, or you might say a false promise. A compelling false promise that promises deliverance but demands some kind of compromise in your life. And that's true of these three temptations.

And then the third thing is some kind of an act of faith. Temptation is always going to pull you away from God's path towards something or someone else. There's always a legitimate need, a false promise, and an act of faith. And so all temptation has religious overtones. All temptation is a question of worship it's a question of who's going to have the allegiance of your heart, who's going to win the battle for your soul. Are you going to worship the Lord? Are you going to worship someone or something else? So to help you see that in these three temptations I'm going to refer to these three temptations as gods.

False gods, little g gods, but gods that demand worship. Every temptation promises deliverance, but demands a sacrifice, just like false gods demand deliverance, but require a sacrifice. If you're going to worship God, then he requires a sacrifice of obedience and you know worship and those things. If you're going to worship false gods, they also demand a sacrifice. There is no God in the world that doesn't demand something from you. It's the nature of being God that that you that you solicit things from that which worships you. And the same is true of these temptations.

They're all little jeek gods that demand some kind of a worship. The first one is in verse three, when the enemy says, if you're the Son of God Then tell these stones to become bread. Now I want to show you a picture of this. These images are made from grok, I think, is what I used. I said, give me a give me a picture of Jesus facing temptation of turning stones into bread. And when it put this picture together, I'll be, if it doesn't look like Mrs. Baird's, bread loaf, these little glowing rocks like looking like like bread.

I thought that is so cool. So I had to use it. That that for Jesus after fasting forty days and forty nights, this temptation to turn stones into bread. It makes a lot of sense. He's essentially saying satisfy your appetite, Jesus. Now I'm going to use the word sensuality. This is the false God of sensuality. It's the false God of sensual pleasure. And sensuality for a lot of people, they go immediately to sexual overtones, but that's not technically what the word means. Sensuality is it's pleasure for any of the five senses.

That's where the word sensual senses. It's the senses of your life. What are the senses? You have your sight, your smell. Your taste, your touch, and your hearing, right? And there are things in life that tempt you to satisfy the appetites derived from those five senses. And so because you have things that you want to touch, sometimes you can be tempted to touch or do things that you know you shouldn't do, tempted to eat things you shouldn't eat, or eat in a mouth that you shouldn't eat, see things that you shouldn't see hear things that you shouldn't hear.

These are temptations every human has by virtue of being a human. Every human has senses that need to be satisfied. We have appetites that we long to quench and that is true of Jesus just like every other human. And so Satan is saying, why don't you just turn these stones into bread? Why don't you feed yourself? And for you and me, it would probably not look this way. Has anyone else fasted for 40 days? Lately? You don't have to fast for 40 days to fill sensual temptation, do you? You can you can stuff your face for 40 minutes and still have a appetite for ice cream, right?

We went to this last Saturday, my family and I went to Potter's Pizza, which I'm not the big biggest fan of Potter's Pizza, but it's pretty good. But the best part about Potter's is the free ice cream, right? And so I hadn't eaten all day, so I wait I ate way too much pizza. And they didn't have the kind I liked, so I ended up eating some barbecue sauce pizza which jacked me up really bad. But then I had to like compromise I had to overcompensate with the good pizza I did like, so by the time that came out it was point is it was sinfully upset it was too much too much pizza.

But even though I was stuffed to the brim, when my kids went to go get the ice cream, I was like, I got room for that. I can do some of that. I was stuffed, but there was still a temptation for sensual pleasure. You can think about it in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve were before sin entered into the world, the Lord gave Adam and Eve trees galore. He said, You can eat from any tree in the Garden of Eden. Any tree is good for food. There's just one tree I don't want you to eat from.

And that tree is the not the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And that was the one tree that Satan used to say, don't you want this one? Instead? Did God really say you couldn't have any of the trees in the Garden of Eden? Did God really say that it's that it's going to cause you to die? He puts a question mark, even though they had an abundance of provision, there was still the temptation to transgress. That's how it works in our life too You can have an abundance of money, you can have an abundance of shelter, you can have an abundance of food, you can have an abundance of anything, and yet still feel a longing to satisfy sensual appetites in ways that transgress.

The word of God. They go beyond what the scripture lays out as God's design. And that's what Jesus' response essentially points out. He says in verse 7 it's written, devil, that man must not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. If you go to the next slide, his quotation is actually a quotation of the Old Testament not only does he quote the Old Testament, he quotes Deuteronomy chapter 8, which if you turn there and look at the context, Deuteronomy chapter 8 is talking about the temptation of Israel in the wilderness.

Israel would come out of the slavery to Egypt. They were making their way to the promised land. So Jesus has been meditating on their experience while he's being tempted. While he's

fasting in the wilderness for 40 days, he's been meditating on the wilderness testing of Israel. And so when Satan tempts him to turn stones into bread, he's like, oh yeah, that's just like what they did in the Old Testament. That's the manna. That came from heaven. I can, hey, I'm God. I can turn stones into manna, just like God did.

And then he reminds himself, no, that would be putting God to the test. And if you go to Deuteronomy chapter 8, verse 3. This is what the Lord says. He says, I let you go hungry. I intentionally created a shortage in your life so that you could learn to trust my word and not your gut. Because if you always trust your gut, your appetites, and not me, your appetites are going to drive you into slavery and death. And so I let you go hungry, and then I gave you manna to eat.

Which you didn't know about, so that you might learn that man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. And so the lie, the false promise, is that you can have satisfaction apart from Scripture. Now I use scripture for us. Back then the scripture wasn't created, but what we have in Scripture is a written record of God's good design for our lives. We have a written record for what sensual pleasure should look like in our lives, what sexual pleasure should look like, the domain in which it's pursued.

What physical pleasure should look like, the boundary lines that are in place. Even pagan philosophers have picked up on this idea that when you pursue pleasure to the extremes, it is a vice and not a virtue. You see this in Aristotle and his discussion of goodness and virtue. So often real freedom is found in the mean. It's not found in the excesses, and that's what scripture helps us to see. Scripture is not a straitjacket to keep you from enjoying life. It's God is, and when God says you should only pursue sex within marriage, between one man and one woman for one lifetime.

He's not saying that because he wants to be a buzzkill or to ruin your life or to keep you from fun. He's wanting you to enjoy sex in its greatest fulfilling way. When you when you put it in that domain, it's better than in any other domain. As one of my mentors used to say, it's like fire in your house. When it's in the fireplace, it'll heat the whole house and keep your whole family warm. When it's outside the fireplace, it'll burn your entire house down and ruin your life. And scripture creates a boundary line so that those physical pleasures can be enjoyed in their the way they were meant to be enjoyed, providing freedom and not slavery.

And I promise you, if you think about your life and you think about the slavery of addiction, if you think about disease and being out of shape and having all the physical problems that you have. So many times the reason you find yourself in that slavery is because you transgress the boundary lines of scripture. Scripture said, why you know take drinking, for example. Drinking is not a sin. Jesus turned water into wine, whatever. But the Bible says, don't ever be drunk. You shouldn't be drunk. Well, if you pursue it to its excess, drunkenness will create slavery in your life.

You become an addict to alcohol. The Bible says everything's permissible, but not everything is helpful. I won't be dominated or enslaved by anything. That's the same thing that's behind this temptation of Jesus. So don't believe the lie that you can pursue pleasure outside of Scripture. The sensuality God will promise but not deliver. The second temptation is in verse 5. The devil takes Jesus to the Holy City. I don't know that this was a physical journey as much as a vision He sees Jerusalem, and then Jesus stands on the pinnacle of the temple, and then Satan says to him, if you're 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. So Satan doubles down, right? He questions if you're the Son again, but this time he quotes Scripture. He's like, Jesus, you want to quote Scripture? I'll quote Scripture. So he quotes Psalm 91. Psalm 91 is a psalm that was written to build people's assurance that God is a protector, that God is a shield and a refuge. But what Satan is doing is he's twisting it a little bit.

He takes Jesus to Jerusalem, which was the holy city, and he puts him at the top of the Jewish temple, which is where Jewish people went to worship. Imagine Jewish people in worship longing for Messiah. When will Messiah come? When will he deliver us? And then somebody stands on the top of the temple, jumps off the temple, and God's angels come and swoop in and save him. Fulfilling the messianic Psalm 91, this is him. This is Satan basically saying, Jesus, you can have what you want. Everyone will know you're the Messiah, and you won't have to take any risk.

Everyone will know you're God's man and there won't be any dangers, no threat of failure. It's guaranteed success. Why don't you do this instead of that? Why don't you do it this way instead of God's way? God wants you to like shh hush hush don't tell anybody. Don't tell anybody about the miracles God wants you to experience opposition from the Pharisees and the religious establishment. God ultimately is going to create a path that revolves around suffering and death. Why go that route when the scripture says God's son can have it without those sufferings.

God's son can be a God will be a shield, the Father will be a shield and a and a refuge for the Son. And so it's here's the temptation, it's testing God instead of trusting him. The first temptation is feeding the flesh instead of feeding your faith, and the second temptation is to test God instead of trusting God. It's essentially like this. God, I'll do what you call me to do so long as we do it without any pain or suffering. God, I'll go this road that you want me to go, but you've got to de-risk it for me.

You can't let it cause any kind of well too many trials, too many tribulations. God, I'm happy to obey you so long as you use my plan and not a different plan or not your plan. And that's the temptation Jesus or Satan is giving Jesus. It is the security God is what I'm going to call him. The security God. If you can test God instead of trust him. And Jesus' response brings

that into focus. By saying it's written, do not test the Lord your God. If you want to turn there, you can see it.

The problem wasn't with Satan using God's word, it's that Satan twisted the word of God to create bad theology. Satan is pretty pretty gifted in terms of knowing what the Scripture says. He probably knows the Scripture better than m most of us. He studied it longer and he's committed himself to it more than many. So he uses this Psalm which was written again to s to bolster people's confidence in God's protection over their life. But notice he assumes that God's protection means you'll never experience threats or risks. If you read the Psalm in its context, nothing could be further from the truth.

He'll cover you with his feathers. This is God. For those who trust in him, you can take refuge under his wings. His faithfulness will be a protective shield, but notice what you're going to face. You don't have to fear the terror of the night, the arrow that flies by day. The plague that stalks in darkness, the pestilence that ravages at noon. Notice day and night, day and night, arrows, plagues, pestilence. Though a thousand fall at your side, in other words, you're in the battle, but you're safe within it. You're not pulled from the battle, but you're shielded within the battle.

Though 10,000 fall at your right hand, the pestilence will not the Lord is not saying if you'll ob if you'll be obedient to his will for your life that you'll never face any hardships. He's never saying it won't become difficult. Or that you won't face dangers and storms. All that the Lord is promising is that it won't thwart my plan. It won't keep me from achieving the purposes I have for you. For Jesus it ultimately resulted in his death but God says I'm bringing life out of that death because nothing will keep me from accomplishing my will for those who are my anointed those who trust in the Lord Will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

So Satan is quoting Scripture, he's twisting it, he's taking the true truth and twisting it. By the way, this is how a lot of preachers preach Psalm 91. It's a it's a tragedy that they take Scripture. And make it mean something that it never meant. Being sometimes being obedient to the will of God will require submission. And being obedient to the will of God will result in threats and dangers. The false promises that you can have safety without submission to that kind of plan. You cannot have true safety outside the will of God.

And that's what Jesus tells the devil. I can't test, I can't put the Lord to the test. If you go to the next slide, the quotation from Jesus, do not test the Lord your God. That's also from Deuteronomy, but chapter six, verse sixteen. If you'll turn there to Deuteronomy, or if not, you can look on the screen. In Deuteronomy 6. 16, the Lord is recounting what he did and delivering them from Egypt. And says, don't worship other gods, the Lord is a jealous God. And then in verse 16, he says.

Do not test the Lord your God as you tested him at Massah. Does anyone know what Massah was? It's not the stuff that tamales are made out of. Massah, if you don't know, was a location where Israel received water from a rock. After grumbling and complaining against the Lord. I'll just recap the story in case you're not familiar. In Exodus 17 Israel has left the wilderness of sin was what it's called. It's a little on the nose, but they left the wilderness of sin and they're making their way to the promised land.

And then it says when they got to Rephidim They made camp, but there was no water at the camp, and so it says the people began to grumble and complain against Moses. And they must have been really hot because Moses believes they're going to stone him to death. They're going to stone me, and they're going to go back to Egypt because they think it was better there. And so Moses cries out to God and he says, help me with these people. They're grumbling and complaining. And the Lord basically says, they're grumbling against you, but they're testing me.

And that's not okay. And so he says, Moses, what I want you to do is I want you to go to the rock of Horeb. There's a certain rock at a certain place, and he says, I want you to take your staff that you used to split the Red Sea, and I want you to strike the rock with your staff, and water will come from the rock. And so that's what Moses does. He takes the people to the rock of Horeb. He takes his staff, he strikes the stone, and water comes from the rock.

And right after the water comes from the rock, he makes a statement rebuking Israel He says, I'm going to name the place Massah and Meribah, which means grumbling and complaining, or grumbling and testing, because the Israelites complained and because they tested the Lord, saying, is the Lord among us? Or not. Here's what they were doing. God, you can only be for me, or this can only be your plan if there's not enough, if there's no risk. This can only be your plan if what I think I need is met. This can you will only be for me so long as you're doing what I want.

You can only be for me so long as I don't hurt or experience difficulty and that is not a biblical picture of walking in the will of God. Sometimes the will of God requires submission to dangerous times. Sometimes it requires entering into threats and difficulties knowing that God is faithful in every season. So Jesus says, no, I'm not going to test the Lord. I'm going to trust him, believing that he'll be my shield in the storm. And then finally the devil took him to a very high mountain, and he showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.

And he said to him, I'll give you all these if you'll just fall down and worship me. So the mask is off. The devil saying the quiet part out loud. He doesn't attack his sonship. He says, I see you know what you are. I see you know what that means. But is it not true as the Son of God, your inheritance is the nations? Is it not true what you deserve is to be worshipped and

adored. Is that not what the Messiah is given from the Father as an inheritance? So how about this, Jesus?

Instead of obtaining that inheritance through the suffering of the cross, why don't you just let me give it to you and bow down and worship me? The false God is what I call it, the false God of supremacy. The promise is Jesus, you can be better than everybody else. You can be the most powerful king. You can be the most glorious kingdom. You can have such splendor and majesty, not only will you possess it, but everyone will know that you possess it, and they'll hail you as great and awesome. That's what we all want, right?

We want that's why we compare ourselves with each other. We want to be better than other people. It's not just that we want to have an awesome life. We want everyone to see our awesome life and go right Deep down I think that's what we want. It's this idea of significance of being glorious and renowned. And the crazy thing is Jesus deserved all of that. It was a promised inheritance in Psalm chapter 2. Ask of me, and I'll give you the nations. What Satan is tempting Jesus with is you can have the crown without the cross.

You can have all the power and dominion without the suffering that's implied. And Jesus essentially says, no, I won't do that. I won't take the shortcut. Of success without the suffering. And so he quotes again Deuteronomy chapter six if you'll go to the next slide He says, go away, Satan, for it is written, worship the Lord your God and serve him only. Right before the passage we read earlier in the second temptation. The Lord warns Israel, when you get into the promised land, don't you dare forget me. Don't you forget how I delivered you from slavery to Pharaoh in Egypt.

Don't forget the pillar of cloud. Don't forget the parting of the Red Sea. Don't forget you're my people. Don't forget I'm your God. Because when you get into the promised land, there will be Canaanites worshiping other gods. And if you begin to worship other gods, like the pagan peoples around you, I am a jealous God, and I will wipe you from the face of the earth. And ironically, that's exactly what happened. They got into the promised land, they began worshiping other gods, and so God takes the promised land from them, and they become overtaken by the Assyrians.

All of it could have been avoided if they just would have remembered the Lord, if they would have if they would have heard and heeded the words, fear the Lord your God. Worship him and take your oaths in his name. Don't follow the other gods, for the Lord your God who's among you is a jealous God. Jesus is recognizing I can't have these good gifts that God has promised to give without submission and faith in the God who is the giver of those gifts. And the same is true for you and me.

The Lord has a beautiful plan, a wonderful plan for your life. He has a goodness and benefit, not harm, but it requires you it requires your total submission. It requires your a

commitment to going within his boundary lines of scripture, and it requires a willingness to experience suffering on this side of the equation, suffering before the glory, the cross before the crown. And Jesus, like everyone else in that time period, would have had assumptions to suggest otherwise. Everybody was waiting for Messiah in the first century time of Jesus. And everybody assumed that the Messiah would be a political leader.

Everybody assumed the Messiah would overthrow the Roman Empire, that he would rally the people of Israel, and he would establish a political kingdom, an earthly political kingdom that would have dominion over the earth that's what Satan is offering, and that's what Jesus is resisting. Because Jesus knew something better, something deeper from the Old Testament. The Old Testament Messiah was a deliverer, he was a liberator, but the greatest need for the people of God was not political deliverance, the greatest need for the people of God was deliverance from their sins. And the only way they could have their sins forgiven, the only ways they could experience redemption is if he stood in their place, if he was faithful where they were faithless, and if he laid down his life on the cross as an atoning sacrifice.

That was the path of the Messiah. It was the path of the suffering servant. It was a cross before the crown and a new kingdom that would come later. And you know I think this is what Jesus is resisting because this same language shows up again when Jesus says, go away, Satan. He says those same exact words in Matthew 16. Except in Matthew 16, he doesn't say them to Satan. He says them to one of his disciples. He says it to Peter on the heels of a discussion about who do people say that I am?

Jesus says, who do people say that I am? His disciples say John the Baptist, Elijah, I don't know. And then Jesus says, who do you say that I am? And Peter says you're the Christ. Not only are you the Christ, you're the Son of the living God. And then Jesus goes on to tell them how as the Son of God he must suffer. He must suffer many things. From the elders, chief priests, and scribes, he must be killed and raised on the third day. And when Peter hears those words, look at what he says.

He rebukes Jesus and says, oh no, Lord, this will never happen to you. Jesus, we need you to be the political Messiah. We need you to turn stones into bread. There's legitimate hunger needs. There's legitimate political needs there's legitimate security needs, and only you can provide that safety. We need you to satisfy our sensual longings and our security. We need you to make us great, greater than all the other nations. And Jesus turns around and looks Peter in the eye and says exactly what he says on Matthew 4, get behind me, Satan.

Get behind me, Satan. You're a hindrance to me because you're thinking about human concerns and not God's concerns. And at the end of the day, that's always what spiritual shortcuts require. They require you to take a false, they require you to believe the false promise of a false God and offer a sacrifice of unbelief. And the only way to overcome temptation is to do what Jesus did. To embrace the role of a son. And be submissive to the

plan of the Father. By embracing the role of a son, he chose a path of suffering by embracing the role of a son, he submitted himself to the scripture and the prophetic vision of Messiah.

Who would be pierced for their transgressions, crushed for their iniquities, and by stripes bring about their healing. And that's what we celebrate when we take the Lord's Supper. Jesus is the true Passover lamb, the true deliverance from a greater slavery. And that slavery for you and me is slavery to sin and death. It's the slavery to take the shortcuts when the enemy brings them our way, whether that's the shortcut of sexual immorality. Or overeating or disease, whether that's the shortcut of security without submission to God's will. Jesus not only secured eternal life when you fail temptation, Jesus has also given you power to resist it like he did.

And so as we enter into this time of response, if you don't have faith in a relationship with the Lord this morning you can receive that as a gift of God's grace through faith. So I'm going to ask you to bow your heads as our ushers take their place. And if you've never made a decision to trust in Jesus as your Lord and Savior, it really is as simple as the other side of temptation. The pressing need is the need of your sin and guilt. The promise of God is total forgiveness.

But for that forgiveness to become yours, You must repent and trust in Jesus. Trust that He paid the price for your sins and that three days later God raised him from the dead. And if you'll confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart God raised him from the dead. Dead and you will be saved. And so if you're this morning choosing to make Jesus your Lord and Savior in a moment, I'm going to ask you to indicate that on your worship guide, on the connection card, and you can put it in the offering plate in just a few moments.

For the rest of us, I'm I know that we all face temptations of various kinds. The Holy Spirit brought to your mind what the Lord wants to deal with you today. Whether it's the first or second or third temptation, the Holy Spirit is the one that brings conviction. And so would you let this time of response be a time of surrender and obedience, a time of submission to what the Father is calling you to do, and a time of faith and trusting that his plans will succeed. Just as they succeeded through the suffering and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord.

And so Lord, as we enter into this time of response as we take the Lord's Supper, would it be reflective of hearts that are fully surrendered? Submitted to your will. Jesus, we thank you that you took no shortcuts and as a result you were powerful to save, mighty to save, because you faced every temptation but did so without sin. We thank you for giving us that righteousness as a gift by grace through faith. And we pray that we can recover and embody the life that Jesus lived. We pray these things in Jesus' name.

And God's people said. Amen.