

From the life of Jesus, we are able to learn how Satan seeks to divert all of us from our God-spoken identities and assignments in the kingdom. In subtlety, the enemy is constantly seeking to redirect our minds and wills towards lesser investments of who we are in the Kingdom. Harnessing the world system and the different streams of influence from our culture, Satan and his demons are committed to the art of diversion. If they can succeed in disconnecting and diverting us from our true identities as sons and daughters, then they are able to redirect our eternal focus unto a temporary focus. When they are successful at these diversions, Christians no longer live FOR the Kingdom of God even though they are living IN the Kingdom of God. The raw truth is that the enemy succeeds in this tactic of diversion in the lives of innumerable believers. We are able to learn how to consistently overcome Satan’s strategies by learning from Jesus himself as Satan sought to divert Jesus from the assignment He received from the Father.

## I. Kingdom identity is assigned (3:16 -17)

16 And when Jesus was baptized, immediately He went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on Him; 17 and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

**AFTER IDENTITY IS ASSIGNED AND RECEIVED FROM THE FATHER, THE ENEMY FORGES AN ASSAULT TO PREVENT KINGDOM ACTIVITY FROM FLOWING FORTH FROM KINGDOM IDENTITY. HE USES THIS SAME APPROACH WITH US.**

## II. The diversion of self-preservation(4:1-4)

**SELF-PRESERVATION RUNS COUNTER TO THE KINGDOM VALUE OF ETERNAL PRIORITIES**

A. Jesus Kingdom commitments required spiritual sacrifices (1-2) - “Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights, He was hungry.”

**WEAKENED PHYSICAL CAPACITY**

B. Satan exploited Jesus’ physical weakness and attacked His identity (3) - “And the tempter came and said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.”

**DIRECT ATTACK ON HIS IDENTITY COUPLED WITH A TEMPTATION TO PROVE/DEFEND HIMSELF**

C. Jesus strongly resisted Satan by declaring His dependence upon the Father (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.””

**JESUS ANSWERS WITH A RESTING IN ETERNAL TRUTH AND A RESISTANCE TO THE TEMPTATION TO PRESERVE HIMSELF. HE PRIORITIZES TRUSTING OBEDIENCE TO THE FATHER ABOVE MEETING HIS DEEP FELT, TEMPORARY DESIRES.**

## III. The diversion of self-assertion (4:5-7)

**SELF-ASSERTION RUNS COUNTER TO THE KINGDOM VALUE OF SUBMISSION**

A. The setting for this diversion (5) - “Then the devil took Him to the holy city and set Him on the pinnacle of the temple...”  
**An elevated view, an exalted position, an isolating height**

B. An attack on identity with a temptation of presumption (6) - "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ""He will command His angels concerning you," and ""On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.”” **Notice that the attack on identity recurred and was coupled with a twisting of Scripture to promote self-assertion outside of God’s will.**

C. Jesus overcomes by refusing to force the hand of the Father (7) - “Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.””

John 5:19 - “So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of His own accord, but only what He sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.”

#### IV. The diversion of self-exaltation (8-10)

##### **SELF-EXALTATION RUNS COUNTER TO THE KINGDOM VALUE OF PATIENT HUMILITY**

A. A consistent tactic is repeated & elevated (8) - "Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory."

From the stones of the ground (vs. 3) to the top of the Temple (vs. 5) to the heights of a mountain. Satan will sometimes elevate you for his own purposes. Some people cannot handle elevation without losing their identity and being diverted from their God-ordained Kingdom assignments.

B. Satan's core-value is exposed (9) - "And he said to Him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Satan wanted Jesus to exchange His own kingdom for the kingdoms of this world. He wants every Christian to do the same.

C. Jesus refuses to be diverted (10) - "Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, ""You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.""

James 4:7 - "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

When the diversion tactic of Satan is fully manifest, Jesus issues an authoritative dismissal of him. When we sense the solicitation from Satan to divert us from our identity and assignment, we need to take authority and act decisively. We cannot flirt with his attempts to redirect us from our Kingdom paths and onto the tantalizing pathways of this world system.

#### IV. The diversion fails and clarity is gained (11,17)

A. We see a strengthened Son (11) - "Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to Him."

B. We see a strengthened certainty (17) - "From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

Having been offered all of the kingdoms of the world, and having resisted the diversion tactic from Satan, Jesus immediately began His public ministry by calling all people to change their own thinking about the kingdoms of this world and to embrace the everlasting Kingdom of God as the context for their lives.