

Rev. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church
Matthew 4:8-11 | The Third Temptation
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WELCOME:

- Please turn your Bibles to Matthew 4.
- Bibles in back—our gift to you.

REVIEW:

Over the past ^{three} four weeks, we have been studying the temptations of Jesus.

We have learned that in English, the word *temptation* means— “trick to do evil.”

However, the Greek word for temptation is very different than our understanding—
peirasmós (per-ahz-mos)

Peirasmós— means much more than our English definition.

Peirasmós.—“to test or tempt.” To prove worthy or unworthy.

LW:

KEYPOINT:

Peirasmós is a neutral word that can be used as testing for good or temptation for evil.

From God’s viewpoint, *peirasmós* is always a test for His children.

A test is to build up spiritual muscle to grow us into the people God designed us to be.

From Satan’s perspective, however, *peirasmós* is always a temptation.

Same word—but used for wickedness.

The issue with *peirasmós* —being tested or tempted— is that you can't really see the difference until you experience the outcome.

If I pass, it's a *test* that proves that I'm growing in my faith.

If I fail, it's a *temptation* in which I was enticed by my ^{desires} wickedness and chose to sin. —James 1:14

Because of that

We are learning that the three temptations of Jesus are vital lessons for our own lives.

Because Jesus gives us a plan to follow when we're tempted.

As we know, Jesus is victorious over all temptations.

Jesus not only overcame all temptation—Jesus triumphed over temptation at the highest level every single time.

↳ of temptation

That's why the writer of Hebrews says this.

Hebrews 4:15—For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, (High Priest is Jesus) but one who has been tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin.

And what we were learning from this narrative is that Jesus chose these three specific temptations because they represent every other type of temptation.

These three temptations point to the very root of every other kind of temptation that you and I experience.

Jesus's first temptation, on the surface, appeared to deal with turning stones into bread.

However, we learned that bread was the mechanism for Jesus to sin by taking control of His life.

The apostle John calls this the lust/desires/cravings of the flesh,

So, how often do we grab control out of the Father's hands because we fear that we won't have enough bread for tomorrow or that the bills won't be paid?

Jesus' second temptation was one of those—I double-dog dare ya—types of temptations.

Satan tempted Jesus to throw Himself off the top of the Temple so that angels would come and save Him.

The hidden sin in this temptation is to steal God's glory and take it for ourselves.

How often are we tempted to brag about ourselves?

How often do we throw in some subtle comments to let everyone know how smart we are—to build ourselves up—essentially stealing God's glory for what He is accomplishing through us.

INTRODUCTION:

That set's us up for Jesus' third temptation today.

Today's temptation is something that we have all struggled with at one time or another.

The temptation to have it all—all the money and power this world offers.

So, how do we deal with and overcome this temptation? Let's find out!

Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 4:8-11 CSB

Matthew 3:16— When Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water. The heavens suddenly opened for him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him.

Matthew 3:17— And a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased."

Matthew 4:1—Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

Matthew 4:2— After he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

Matthew 4:3— Then the tempter approached him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

Matthew 4:4— He answered, "It is written: Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."

Matthew 4:5— Then the devil took him to the holy city, had him stand on the pinnacle of the Temple,

Matthew 4:6— 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."**

Matthew 4:7— Jesus told him, "It is also written: **Do not test the Lord your God.**",

Matthew 4:8— Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.

Matthew 4:9— And he said to him, "I will give you all these things if you will fall down and worship me."

Matthew 4:10— Then Jesus told him, "Go away, Satan! For it is written: **Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.**"

Matthew 4:11— Then the devil left him, and angels came and began to serve him.

This is the Word of the Lord for River Bible Church.

EXEGESIS:

Matthew 4:8— Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.

Last Sunday, we addressed whether or not Satan physically and literally "took" Jesus from the desert to the Temple in verse 5.

Matthew 4:5— Then the devil took him to the holy city.

Did Jesus and Satan walk the 10-40 miles from the desert to Jerusalem?

Or did they see some type of vision?

We discussed the pros and cons of both of those options.

Here's another question/possibility that we didn't discuss last week—

Were Jesus and Satan supernaturally transported somehow like Philip was after he baptized the Ethiopian official and was "carried away" by the Holy Spirit? (Acts 8)

Well, we concluded—and still conclude—that Jesus and Satan did indeed walk because the verb “took” in verse five is active and present.

“Took” has a literal meaning—to *take or guide somewhere*.

Now, we have that same question here in verse eight.

Matthew 4:8— *Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain*

It’s the same verb—so in this context, it appears that once again, Jesus and Satan walked to a mountain and hiked it.

Now, We are not told what specific mountain, but there are two possibilities:

Mount Nebo is 4,000 feet above sea level.

It’s about a two-day walk from Jerusalem.

Mount Nebo is located near the city of Jericho.

This is the same mountain where Moses viewed the promised land.

The second possibility is Mount Hermon.

The peak of Mount Hermon is the highest point in Israel—9200 feet above sea level.

It’s a six-day walk from the Temple.

So when you consider all this walking that Jesus and Satan may have done, it still fits within the forty days and forty nights of Jesus fasting and being tempted.

Matthew 4:8— *Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.*

Luke's Gospel provides a detail not found in Matthew:

Luke 4:5— *So he took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.*

Here's where it gets interesting.

No matter how high the mountain was—there had to be some type of additional supernatural vision.

Because it's humanly impossible to see all the world's kingdoms from one place.

Jesus is being tested as the Son of Man—emphasizing His humanity.

So He can only see as far as you and me.

Secondly, the Earth is a globe—it's not flat.

Lastly Luke confirms it.

So in this third temptation, it appears that Satan not only physically took Jesus to one of these mountains but is pulling out all the stops and also provided some type of demonic vision.

What did Jesus see?

We don't know for sure, and there's no reason to be dogmatic.

But if we want to remain faithful to correct Biblical hermeneutics, where would we turn to learn the most about a nation's wealth, glory, and power?

Does a certain OT King come to mind? King Solomon!

And his wealth, power, and glory are recorded in 2 Chronicles 9.

I want to highlight some of these verses from this chapter to give us some context here.

Notice the terminology Scripture uses—“^{before}never, ^{like it}whatever, nothing, surpassed.”

2 Chronicles 9:9—Then she (Queens of Sheba) gave the king four and a half tons of gold, a great quantity of spices, and precious stones. **There never** were such spices as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

4.5 tons of gold...

A ton is 2,000 lbs = well over 20 million dollars today.

2 Chronicles 9:10—In addition, Hiram's servants and Solomon's servants who brought gold from Ophir also brought algum wood and precious stones.

More gold

Ophir is a land renowned for its fine gold and other precious goods.

2 Chronicles 9:11—The king made the algum wood into walkways for the Lord's Temple and for the king's palace and into lyres and harps for the singers. **Never before** had anything like them been seen in the land of Judah.

2 Chronicles 9:12—King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba her every desire, **whatever she asked—far more** than she had brought the king.

King Solomon gave her more than the 20 million dollars that she gave him!

2 Chronicles 9:13—The weight of gold that came to Solomon annually was twenty-five tons,

Today's currency= ^{well} over 100 million dollars annually.

2 Chronicles 9:14— besides what was brought by the merchants and traders. All the Arabian kings and governors of the land also brought gold and silver to Solomon.

2 Chronicles 9:19— Twelve lions were standing there on the six steps, one at each end. **Nothing like it had ever been made** in any other kingdom.

2 Chronicles 9:20— All of King Solomon's drinking cups were gold, and all the utensils ... were pure gold. There was no silver, since it was considered **as nothing** in Solomon's time,

2 Chronicles 9:22— King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the world in riches and wisdom.

So on top of Jesus seeing the Great Empires of Rome, Egypt, and Greece, is it possible that Jesus saw the wealth, power, and glory of Israel in its heyday?

So, all ^{the world's} ~~this~~ wealth is offered to Jesus with one stipulation— one simple genuflection to the father of lies.

Notice that Satan didn't show Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world— and their sin."

Satan focuses on worldly splendor, magnificence, and glory.

And it's after this supernatural vision Satan makes this statement.

Matthew 4:9— ~~And he said to him,~~ "I will give you all these things if you will fall down and worship me."

Wait a second!

Does Satan really own all the kingdoms of the world?

For Satan to give these things to Jesus, it means that he must own them first.

Scripture has much to say about this.

Let's start with Luke's Gospel:

Luke 4:5— So Satan took Jesus up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

Luke 4:6— The devil said to him, "I will give you their splendor and all this authority, because it has been given over to me, and I can give it to anyone I want."

It's never a good idea to take the devil's word for it.

Well, Scripture interprets Scripture, so let's see what the Epistles have to say about this.

Ephesians 2:2 NLT—You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world.

1 John 5:19—We know that we are children of God and that the world around us is under the control of the evil one.

So here's the question:

Do these passages really prove that Satan has the authority to give Jesus all these things?

There is no doubt that Satan has tremendous power.

Scripture confirms that Satan is the Commander over the world systems and the world order. = UNSEEN WORLD

But do these passages prove that the devil is the ultimate legal owner of this wealth, that belongs to nations?

In other words, does Satan have control over creation?

Does Satan truly have the right to give material things away as he pleases?

Scripture interprets more Scripture, so let's take a look.

Psalm 2 is called the Coronation Psalm.

This is a text where God the Father crowns Jesus as the King of kings.

Psalm 2:7—*He (Father) said to me (Jesus), "You are my Son; today I have become your Father.*

Psalm 2:8—*Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance and the ends of the Earth your possession.*

So let me ask you, does Satan truly have the power to give the world and all its splendor to Jesus?

Let us not forget that Satan is a liar.

John 8:44—*When he tells a lie, he speaks from his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies.*

The truth is that the Father has already promised Jesus the nations as His inheritance.

But what Satan is doing—is trying to write a check that his mouth can't cash.

When Satan says, "All this has been handed over to me" — that is partially true.

He is legitimately the Commander of the world system—the world's morality.

But, it's not true that the created world—the nations and its physical gold— has been handed over to Satan.

Do you see how subtle Satan is with these temptations?

KEYPOINT #1:

Satan controls, not owns, the world's kingdoms.

So here's a question that we've asked with the first two temptations, and we need to ask it here as well.

What's the real temptation for Jesus?

It's as if Satan is saying to Jesus...

"Why should you have to wait for what is legally yours?"

*Why do you submit as a Servant— when you could reign as a King right now?
I'm only offering you what the Father has already promised.*

Do you see the temptation?

Jesus is tempted to step outside of the Father's will and bypass suffering once again.

We said it last week, and we'll repeat it again here.

Satan is offering Jesus a crown without the cross.

The timing for Jesus' rule and reign is premature.

God the Father says that Jesus must first suffer before He reigns.

We know Jesus will reign as King. ^{cosmos/world order systems: monarchy}
Revelation 11:15—The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign forever and ever

But the path in which Jesus will reign is ^{the world} through suffering.

Satan seems to offer what The Father offers, BUT his price is much cheaper.

At least initially.

It's the classic bait and switch.

^{Back to}
Matthew 4:9— And he said to him, "I will give you all these things if you will fall down and worship me."

Notice ^{what} that Satan didn't say in verse nine.

He didn't say, "***If you're the Son of God***" as in the first two temptations.

Why not?

It's like the devil acknowledges the fact that Jesus is the Son of God.

Secondly, notice that Satan didn't misquote Scripture to Jesus as he did previously.

So Satan is changing his demonic tactics here.

When you peel the layers back, it's not only worship that Satan wants.

And Jesus sees right through Satan's charade.

Matthew 4:10— Then Jesus told him, "Go away, Satan! For it is written: **Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.**"

Jesus knows that whatever we worship—we will also serve.

Now There are several things to note in verse 10.

First, Jesus finally gives Satan a command.

Jesus has had enough.

After 40 days and 40 nights of fasting.

After overcoming who knows how many temptations.

After possibly walking miles and miles...Jesus is done—"Go Away!"

Secondly, notice how Jesus responds to the temptation.

He responds in the same way that allowed Him to overcome the previous two... "***It is written.***"

Jesus is three for three overcoming temptations by quoting Scripture.

In this particular temptation.
Jesus replied by paraphrasing Deuteronomy 6:13

This is important
Why would Jesus choose this verse to overcome this temptation?

Let's take a look:

Deuteronomy 6:10— "When the Lord your God brings you into the land he swore to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would give you—a land with large and beautiful cities that you did not build,

Deuteronomy 6:11— houses full of every good thing that you did not fill them with, cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant—and when you eat and are satisfied,

Deuteronomy 6:12— be careful not to forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the place of slavery.

Deuteronomy 6:13— Fear the Lord your God, worship him...

By not worshipping Satan, Jesus avoids repeating the sin of Israel when it worshiped the golden calf.

Jesus avoids all the idolatry and adultery throughout the entire OT.

And with Jesus quoting Scripture once again, He overcame the temptation to sin.

Have you noticed the theme that each temptation offers Jesus?

The theme is that there is always an easier way, *than God's way.*

For Jesus, the temptation was to bypass the cross, *every time.*

If Jesus turned stones into bread, he could easily win the people over as Israel's prime minister of social security.

If Jesus jumped from the Temple, he could entertain the nation with signs and wonders.

Lastly, Satan even offers Jesus the world's glory *if he would simply bow to him.* *→ Everything A human being could ~~do~~ desire*

KEYPOINT #2:

As Jesus says "no" to Satan, he says "yes" to suffering.

Matthew 4:11— Then the devil left him, and angels came and began to serve him.

Two things to notice in verse eleven.

Number one, look who has the real power throughout this entire narrative.

When Jesus tells Satan to skat, he does.

Secondly, notice how something supernatural happens to benefit Jesus on a human level for the first time.

God the Father sent angels to help serve Jesus.

These angels obviously have food.

Jesus' test in the wilderness concludes with incredible irony.

As soon as Satan left, the angels appeared and ministered to Him.

Why? Because the fast was over and Jesus was victorious.

The very help that Jesus rejected now is available because of His obedience.

Jesus only had to wait a short amount of time, to overcome the temptation.

So, Jesus has passed the Peirasmós.

He recovers from his fast, and next week, we'll see him formally begin his public ministry in Matthew's Gospel.

PREACH:

I'd like to finish today's sermon on one specific aspect of temptation—resistance.

Somebody once said, "*I can resist anything* but temptation."

Maybe the Lord's prayer should say, "*Lead me not into temptation* because I can find it myself."

When talking about temptation and the resistance to it, there's a familiar verse that comes to mind.

James 4:7—... *submit to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

So my question is, how do we resist?

As Christians, we tend to think that resistance is where the real battle with temptation is won or lost.

So when We hear that word, resist, and what do we think of?

Maybe some of us think about standing firm—we are immovable.

Others of us may want to spiritualize this verse.

Either way...
We think that the godlier we are, the better we'll be at resisting the temptation—but that was before we met the tardigrade from two weeks ago.

We think that resistance is the *only* point of victory or defeat.

We believe that our decision, based right here at the height of the battle against sin, will be controlled by our godliness.

And dear friends, both options are a lie.

Matthew 4:1—*Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.*

After a high point in ministry, Jesus was led somewhere he didn't necessarily want to go.

And we discussed what Jesus did with His time.

He fasted and prayed.

In other words, Jesus was aware of the situation around Him, and He prepared for it.

KEYPOINT #3:

*First, Jesus showed us how to be **aware** of our surroundings.*

If we become aware of our surroundings.

If we become honest about our sin...

then can
~~And we choose to prepare ourselves, we'll step into a new area of battle with temptation.~~
like Jesus for Temptation

KEYPOINT #4:

Temptations that have been anticipated and prayed against, have little power.

We don't have to do what we've always done—and this key point of awareness will help you stop doing those things that you don't want to do anymore.

Here's the downside to being unaware.

It leads to a lifestyle of “white-knuckling” your temptations

Meaning...I'm unaware of my situation...and then BAM! Temptation comes, and I overcome the temptation by sheer grit.

And I can be victorious over sin using that method for a short period of time.

But, those kinds of victories lead to a bigger problem.

Let me ask you...
 What happens when you finally do cave into that temptation?

What happens when you finally... over-eat?

Or explode with anger?

Or have the drink?

Or look at porn? *Pop the pill*

Or you spend the money?

Or you...(fill in the blank).

What happens is that
The pleasure of your sin *is* escalates. — (if becomes more pleasurable)

Sin is pleasurable—we all know this—Scripture confirms it. (Heb. 11:25)

The reason we sin is because we get something out of it.

If we didn't get some type of pleasure out of sin, we wouldn't sin.

KEYPOINT #5:

Human resistance (white knuckling/sheer grit apart from God) *only intensifies the pleasure of the sin.*

When I finally give in, the pleasure of the sin is heightened.

In other words, *resistance* (*Impossible* standing firm) is now working against you.

It keeps you in the spiral of sin.

This incorrect definition of *resistance* is now in opposition to the very thing you're trying to achieve! Why?

holiness

Because you have learned how to increase the pleasure of sin—the very thing you can't control.

So how do you break the spiral of sin?



Follow Jesus' pattern:

1. Submit to God
2. Pray to God
3. Learn the Word of God

Summary of everything we learned over the past month.
Now some of you may think—I'm doing that. I really am!

But I'm still caught up with one particular habitual sin in my life.

It's like the one thing that still has a foothold over me.

If that's the case, let me ask you this...

When is the last time you confessed that particular sin— as sin?

When was the last time you told God— that you still love your sin?

When we have this struggle in our lives—

it's not that we don't love God—it's that we forget about God—until afterward—
and we are overwhelmed with guilt.

Scripture talks a lot about darkness vs light.

And the freedom that comes from bringing things from darkness into the light.

In our context today, that's called confession.



1 John 1:9— *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us
our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

This is the vertical portion of the cross. Confessing our sin to God.

But we can't stop there.

James 5:16—confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed.

James 5:16 changed my life.

It changed my view on temptation and sin altogether.

Many of you know that I was an addict for 20 years of my life.

And when the Lord saved me—I read this verse.

I didn't want to confess my sins to another man.

I thought that my sins were so awful and wretched that no one would understand what went through my head.

But if 1 John 1:9 is the vertical portion of the cross-by confessing sin to God. Then James 5:16 is the horizontal, by confessing our sin to a trusted friend.

And look at the promise that God gives when we do this.

James 5:16—confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. —Why?

Confession of our sin leads to wholeness and healing.

Awareness is the tool that will lead to confession.

And when you confess your sins to God = A trusted friend, you

PRAY/Benediction:

The Lord will protect you from all harm;

he will protect your life.

The Lord will protect your coming and going

both now and forever. (Psalm 121:7-8)

~~scripture says~~ TAKE ONE STEP closer to overcoming temptation.

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