

Rev. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church
Matthew 4:5-7 | The Second Temptation
May 8, 2022

WELCOME:

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

REVIEW:

We started studying the temptations of Jesus several weeks ago.

We saw how after Jesus was baptized, confirmed and then ordained into formal ministry—

How the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by the devil for 40 days and 40 nights.

We studied...

+ *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.

We asked this question:

Have you ever wondered how Jesus was tempted in every way like we are?

Was Jesus truly tempted with anger, lust, laziness, drugs, and depression?

Scripture says yes, but how?

It's a legitimate question because the Gospels only give us three of Jesus' temptations.

And what we were learning from this narrative is that Jesus chose these three specific temptations with the Gospel writers because they are representative of every other type of temptation.

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

If we can understand these three temptations from Jesus, we'll begin to understand our own. — And then how to overcome.

INTRODUCTION:

The apostle John provides more clarity in

1 John 2:15— Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

As Christians, we are not to love (agape) the world order/cosmos/the world's systems.

We are not to love the world's values, beliefs, and morals.

As Christians, we don't live by the world's ever changing standards.

What specifically is John referring to here?

1 John 2:16— For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride in one's possessions—is not from the Father, but is from the world.

When we understand that every sin we commit springs from one of these three temptations—

We can learn how to navigate temptation Biblically, thus eliminating much of the sin in our own life.

Last Sunday, we looked at Jesus' first temptation.

And the apostle John says,

1 John 2:16— *For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh,*

Jesus' first temptation dealt with the lust of his flesh.

Now don't let that word "lust" throw you off—it's not being used as a sexual term in this verse.

Write in your notes, "desire/craving."

We saw Satan tempt Jesus into fulfilling his craving to eat.

On the surface, the temptation looked like it was all about food.

But as we dove into the deep end of the pool, we saw how Jesus was being tempted to:

- doubt the Father's Word,
- to question Father's love,
- and to be suspicious in the Father's provision.

The first temptation was to fulfill all the fleshly cravings/desires outside the will of God.

Don't we have the same temptation today?

1/3 of all temptations come to the root problem of bread.

Will God provide?

Or am I going to have to make something happen?

Will I trust God in His Word, or will I trust me?

That's temptation number one.

Today, we're going to study temptation number two.

The apostle John calls this— the lust/cravings/desires of our eyes.

Scripture shows us how another 1/3 of all our temptations deal with this conversation between Satan and Jesus.

How so? Let's find out.

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

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 4:5-7 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 4:5— *Then the devil took him (Jesus) to the holy city, had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple,*

Last Sunday, we talked about how Matthew writes this narrative in chronological order.

Matt focuses on what seems to be the last three of the many temptations that Luke mentions.

It's as if Satan was trying to wear Jesus down before he got to these final three.

We see how he does this with the adverb, "Then." — It's a transition word.

Matthew 4:5— *Then the devil took him*

The phrase "the devil took him" is a bit mysterious.

Some people believe that it describes some type of visionary experience.

A case could be made for that view.

Jesus, having fasted forty days and forty nights, is on the verge of starvation.

He's not going to have a lot of energy to walk the 10-40 miles from the desert into the city.

Others believe it's better to interpret this verse literally.

A stronger case can be made here ^{From Scripture} because The Greek word "took" in this verse means *to take alongside or bring along*.

Matthew used the same word when Joseph took Jesus and Mary and fled into Egypt in Matthew 2:14.

Question: If Jesus and Satan did walk the 10-40 miles from the desert into the city—which probably took a day or two.

What do you think they talked about?

I don't think Jesus engaged in any conversation with the devil—other than what He felt He had to.

But I can certainly see Satan running his mouth.

Spewing all sorts of twisted half-truths to continue wearing Jesus down.

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

The Holy City is Jerusalem.

That title for the city is seen elsewhere in Scripture.

We see it both in the OT with Nehemiah, Isaiah, along with Matthew and the book of Revelation (Nehemiah 11:1, 11:18, Isaiah 48:2, 52:1, Matthew 27:53, Rev. 11:2, 21:2, 22:10, 22:19.)

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

The pinnacle may have been a special place on an extended part of the roof stretching out over the temple.

A Jewish historian, Josephus, says that there was a 450-foot drop from top to bottom.

That's 110 feet longer than a football field.

This place, the pinnacle of the Temple, is a special place. It's where the priests would sound the trumpet to call the crowd to worship.

We know this because an amazing archaeological discovery ~~was made amid the broken stones of the Temple Mount.~~

In 1969, archaeologists uncovered a stone that had been at the top of the Temple.

It had an inscription in Hebrew that read, *"To the place of the trumpeting for..."*

In all probability, the missing part of the stone read... *"for the Priest."*

So this place, the top of the Temple, would have a gorgeous and commanding view of Jerusalem.

It's also an ideal location for Satan's second temptation.

The whole scene just oozes drama.

Jesus is standing on this ledge, looking out over the holy city of Jerusalem—where millions of people live.

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."

In the first temptation, Satan tried to expose a legitimate need that Jesus had.

Jesus' physical body is on the brink of starvation. ^{It} already existed when the devil showed up.

But in this second temptation, Satan had to create a need.

Matthew 4:6— ~~and said to him~~, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down."

In other words, "*Since you're the Son of God, and I know that you are, jump and prove it.*"

Not only does Satan create the need—look what he does next.

This is wickedly brilliant.

Satan picked up on Jesus' use of Scripture to overcome the first temptation.

So he says to Jesus...

Matthew 4:6— *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.*"

Satan quotes Psalm 91:11–12

In other words, Satan is saying,

"Hmmm, I see that you're a scholar of the Bible.

Well, I just happened to be a theologian as well...graduating from the University of Babylon.

And as I was reading through the Psalms the other day, I came across this verse."

And then Satan quotes it to Jesus.

From Satan's perceptive, If Jesus lived only by the Word of God, then Satan is going to confront Jesus with the Word of God.

Satan is backing Jesus into a corner with the very foundation in which He says He obeys.

Satan was saying...

*"You've been declared to be God's Son and You claim to trust in His Word—
Sooo...prove it."*

"If you won't use your own divine power to feed yourself, then why don't let your Father use His divine power to help you."

In other words, Satan is talking trash about Jesus' Father.

That's quite the temptation! —TO PROVE SATAN WRONG.

What's really interesting about this second temptation is that it's what the Jews wanted all along.

They wanted Jesus to prove that He was indeed the Messiah.

BTW, many false messiahs did precisely that.


A man named Theudas (Thew-des) led a group of people from the Temple to the Jordan River, promising to split the waters as Moses did in the Red Sea.

He, of course, failed and lost his following.

Tradition holds that Simon the magician did what Satan is tempting Jesus to do here. (see Acts 8:9)

Simon jumped off the pinnacle of the Temple.

The good news is that jump was spectacular.

It was the landing he had a problem with. 

So let's slow down and ask... *A question.*

What is the real temptation in all of this?

well, Satan is tempting Jesus to be sensational.

Most people love sensationalism.

People want to be entertained. — *even in church.*

Jesus, Himself tells us to be very careful here.

Matthew 24:24—*For false messiahs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.*

— Context is Great Tribulation — but still applies here.

But here's the problem with sensationalism—it doesn't produce faith.

You would think it would, but it doesn't.

We know this because we see it time and time again in Scripture.

The miracles that God performed through Moses drove many of the Israelites to either presume on God's provisions or hardened their hearts unto greater disbelief.

Let me give you one example.

The Israelites are walking around the desert, and they run out of water and start freaking out.

They don't believe that God will provide.

This is after the splitting of the Red Sea.

This is after God miraculously provides manna and quail to eat.

Not only are the Israelites doubting God, but they're upset that all they have is manna to eat. *—they deserve better*

And they tell Moses— to either give them water or we're going to kill you.

Numbers 20:10— *Moses and Aaron summoned the assembly in front of the rock, and Moses said to them, "Listen, you rebels! Must we bring water out of this rock for you?"*

God provided a miracle through Moses, and the Israelites still didn't trust God.

In the Gospels, we see the same thing.

Jesus' miracles, most of the time, *not every time* hardened the opposition of His enemies.

So even when God performed miracles, most people didn't respond in faith.

What miracles do— is strengthen the faith of those who already believe.

So Satan is tempting Jesus to be sensational here and says to Jesus...

Matthew 4:6— *"If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written:"*

Notice here how Satan mimics Jesus.

"It is written..."

In other words, *“Jesus, this is why jumping off the Temple is a good idea.”*

“Your Scriptures say that you can’t get hurt.”

“Isn’t that the word of God?”

Isn’t that what Your Bible says?

Well, let’s see if the Bible is true.

Do you believe that? I believe it.

I believe that God will save you, and you’ll float down to the ground like a spiritual superhero.

Then the people will realize that you are the Messiah, and people will start following you immediately.”

What more proof of the Father’s love would people need?”

Question: What’s the real temptation?

Last week we learned that these three temptations are unique because Jesus is unique.

But that doesn’t mean that Jesus doesn’t identify with your temptations.

So how does the temptation of jumping off the Temple correlate to your temptations today?

well, If Jesus throws Himself down—it forces God to protect Him.

Jesus would be demanding that the Father prove His love for Him and provide supernatural care.

Here's the thing, Satan uses Scripture as his rationale.

Satan is trying to convince Jesus with the Bible to jump.

It is a sobering thought to realize that Satan not only knows the Scripture but knows it much better than us.

Last week we said that for Satan to be a great deceiver, he must also be a great false theologian.

When Satan quotes Scripture—it's not to build up. It's to tear down.

Satan mishandles and misapplies God's Word.

Satan's hermeneutics were wrong when he quotes Psalm 91.

Hermeneutics deals with the rules that govern the interpretation of Scripture.

We can't do whatever we want w/ the Bible

The first principle of Biblical interpretation is called the "the analogy of faith."

The analogy of faith means that Scripture is its own interpreter.

In other words, Scripture interprets Scripture—because God never contradicts Himself.

In other words, the book of Judges, as horrifying as it is, cannot and will not ever contradict the book of Ephesians, as wonderful as it is.

If we set one part of Scripture against another, we violate the most basic principle of biblical interpretation, which is exactly what Satan was doing.

Satan is quoting from Palm 91.

The context of this Psalm is trusting God.

So let's read Psalm 91 for ourselves—and not just take Satan's word for it.

Psalm 91:1—*The one who lives under the protection of the Most High dwells in the shadow of the Almighty.*

Question: How does one live under God's protection?

Short answer: Through faith and obedience to God's Word.

That's the context of Psalm 91.

So let's see how Satan quotes verses 11 and 12—look closely.

Psalm 91:11—*For he will give his angels orders concerning you, to protect you in all your ways.*

Psalm 91:12—*They will support you with their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.*

Do you see what Satan did in verse eleven?

Psalm 91:11—*For he will give his angels orders concerning you, to protect you in all your ways.*

Satan left out... "to protect you in all your ways."

Isn't that convenient?

The context of Psalm 91 is that God promises to protect the righteous man in all his righteous ways.

Let me ask you. Does jumping off the Temple and asking God bless stupidity sound like a thing that a righteous man would do?

No, but when you pick and choose how to use Scripture, does it not become easier to interpret the passage as if it were a promise from God to protect the righteous *no matter what he does?*

That's what happens when we misquote and misapply Scripture.

We can make it say what we want it to say.

How does Jesus respond to Satan's theological error?

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

Jesus is not playing going to play Satan's game with hermeneutical gymnastics.

Jesus will have no part of cheap, faithless sensationalism.

Note here that Jesus says, "It's also written."

In other words, "*Satan, you want me to test God, but you have to understand that God is not the one who is to be tested.*

I am the one being tested, and that means my responsibility is not to doubt my Father— but to trust him."

The devil's diabolical mistake is intentionally confusing how a righteous God-fearing man accidentally struck his foot against a stone and fell—

Verses Jesus' deliberately jumping off and falling.

Those two things are not the same.

Satan has his theology backward—and he knows it.

Jesus would not be trusting God to take that leap. He would be testing God.

KEYPOINT #1:

We don't test God. God is the one who does the testing.

God has already proven his love and faithfulness to us by His Son Jesus.

God has given us His Son, who walked out of His own grave.

We don't need any more proof than that.

We don't need new signs and miracles to believe.

The signs and miracles have already been given through Jesus.

What we need is faith in what God has already done on our behalf.

KEYPOINT #2:

Satan implied that God is trustworthy only when he rescues us from suffering and danger.

Jesus knew better—and overcame temptation #2.

PREACH:

There is so much for us to learn from this second temptation of Jesus.

Two things that I want us to consider as we close.

First, Jesus' entire life demonstrated The Father's glory—not His own.

I want to apply this thought to what the apostle John says.

1 John 2:16— *For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride in one's possessions—is not from the Father, but is from the world.*

We all have these worldly “lusts/desire/craving’s” to be noticed by others.

Imagine the instant fame and notoriety that Jesus would have had—

If He had ^{leapt} off the Temple and floated down to the ground as Satan suggested.

Instant fame.

And that’s part of the temptation for Jesus, isn’t it?

For Jesus to bypass the ^{cross} and still wear the crown.

And yet, Jesus didn’t come to be accepted— but to be rejected.

He knows that.

But we don’t.

Many times we fall into this temptation by wanting to be accepted. ^{ourselves}

The root temptation here is to steal God’s glory and replace it with our own.

Now we all have a God-given desire to display God’s glory.

As Christians, we have a duty to brag on God.

The apostle Paul says this.

2 Corinthians 10:17— *So let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.*

Paul is paraphrasing the prophet, Jeremiah.

The whole passage says this:

Jeremiah 9:24— *But the one who boasts should boast in this: that he understands and knows me— that I am the Lord, showing faithful love, justice, and righteousness on the earth, for I delight in these things.*

Paul goes on to say:

Galatians 6:14— *But as for me, I will never boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. The world has been crucified to me through the cross, and I to the world.*

Amen & Amen!

However, the unredeemed part of our lives wants to take this God-given desire and twist it for our own benefit.

→ to brag on him

It's an act of self-promotion.

There are some Christians who are really over the top with it.

Many YouTube preachers are this way too.

But most of us, do it in subtle ways.

For example, we're in a Bible study, and we just happen to throw in a few comments to glorify ourselves.

Satan loves this—

Much of today's self-promotion in the Church is under the false pretense of Scripture.

So be careful.

KEYPOINT #3:

Test your motives—not God.

Secondly, we see Truth and error at ^{STAKE} play in today's narrative.

Jesus corrects Satan's error in his mishandling of God's Word.

So, you and I have an obligation to read and interpret Scripture correctly.

We are to read the Word of God by the Spirit of God.

We are to listen to sermons with discerning ears.

We are called to act like Bereans.

The apostle Paul was in Berea and said this...

Acts 17:11—*The people here were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, since they received the word with eagerness and examined the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.*

If you're not examining the Scripture daily and thinking for yourself, how are you going to know when someone misquotes, misapplies, and twists Scripture ^{for their benefit?}

How do you know that what I'm teaching you is correct?

Unless you, yourself are receiving God's Word with eagerness and examining the Scripture daily?

We see hermeneutical gymnastics and outright heresy every day on social media.

How will you know the difference between God's Truth and human error unless your tithing your time with the Lord?

Dear friends, there is nothing more important than your relationship with Jesus.

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you. (Matt 6:33)

→ Jesus → learn from these temptations.
↳ What things - those things that you laid at the feet of the cross at the beginning of the service.

PRAY/Benediction:

*"May the Lord bless you and protect you;
may the Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
may the Lord look with favor on you
and give you peace." ' (Numbers 6:24-26)*

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