

Rev. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church
Matthew 4:1 | Trials, Temptations, and Tests
April 24, 2022

WELCOME:


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

REVIEW:

Last Sunday, we celebrated Easter/Resurrection Sunday.

It was a great day.


We celebrated the the fact that Jesus Christ walked out of His own grave.

That's not just good news, that's the best news ever. 

We had great fellowship afterward. Thank you all for the potluck afterward.

It was a blessing.



Well, today, we're back in Matthew's Gospel.

We continue studying the life of Jesus  before the resurrection verse-by-verse.

And we teach this way so that you can experience God day-by-day.

So two Sundays ago, the Holy Spirit taught us the importance of Jesus' baptism.

And as a quick review, we learned that

-  Jesus, who had no sin, got in line to be baptized with those who had no righteousness.
-  Jesus doesn't need saving because He's the Savior.

- (Jesus offers forgiveness— He doesn't *need* forgiveness.)
- Jesus' death becomes our death, and His resurrection our resurrection.

We discussed how Jesus' baptism was His formal commissioning into ministry.

The Holy Spirit and God the Father ordained Jesus to begin His ministry of redeeming our wretched souls.

Now, you would think that after such a commissioning and ordination ceremony like that—everybody would celebrate.

After all, everyone who was present heard God the Father say, ***"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased."*** (Matt 3:17)

When ordained, most pastors, priests, and ministers have some celebration afterward—but not Jesus.

Instead of celebrating, Jesus leaves the Jordan River and begins fasting.

INTRODUCTION:

Today's text brings one of the most monumental and mysterious spiritual battles of all time.

We're going to learn about the personal confrontation between Jesus Christ—The Son of God—and Satan.

So how does this confrontation impact you today?

Oh, we have so much to learn from this conversation.

There are so many key points in this text. You notetakers are going to be giddy!

When I was preparing this lesson, I planned on teaching verses 1-11, all three temptations.

But when I created my outline, I had so much material I knew that I would need to break it down.

So, I went from eleven versus the 4.

So I planned on preaching temptation one today, temptation two next Sunday, and the third temptation the Sunday after.

But I still had so much material in those four verses that I continued to cut it back and forth, and I realized I had enough for verse one.

And that is our focus today, verse one.

So today will be an introduction to temptation, and starting next Sunday, we'll look at temptation number one.

So all that to say, God's Word has a lot to say about temptation.

And much of this message is so practical for all of us.

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

(Bridge context)

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

That word “then” is a transition word.

As soon as Jesus’ baptism was complete, He left the Jordan River and started walking into the desert.

There’s an urgency here in verse one.

The baptism of Jesus specifically and immediately transitions to His temptation.

There’s a compelling of the Holy Spirit to lead Jesus where He must go next.

There is no time for celebration—Jesus is now on mission, and time is short.

It is no coincidence that Jesus’ temptation immediately follows his baptism.

We see this happen throughout Scripture.

No sooner had Israel been delivered from Egypt—and here comes Pharaoh with his army trying to chase them down through the Red Sea.

No sooner had Elijah called down fire from the sky and killed 450 false prophets—he asked the Lord to take his life. *1 Kings 18*

No sooner had the Apostle Paul received revelations from God—he was assaulted with temptations.

And no sooner had Jesus experienced the first great testimony to His ministry—he now faces the first significant test of His ministry.

Maybe you've had a similar experience where right after conversion or some other big spiritual event in your life—you're on this mountain top experience—

And BAM—you're also tested or tempted like never before.

+ *Matthew 4:1*—Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit...

Timeout! Does that surprise you—that the Holy Spirit (instead of the devil) leads Jesus into temptation?

Why would The Holy Spirit of Almighty God be the initiator for Jesus' temptations?

Over the past three chapters in Matthew's Gospel, we've learned that The Spirit was the one behind the virginal conception of Mary.

We also know that The Spirit is the one that empowered Jesus for ministry (3:16–17).

Isn't it just a tad disturbing that the Holy Spirit is the one leading Jesus into the desert to be tested by the prince of darkness?

+ *Matthew 4:1*—Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness...

Let's talk about the importance of the wilderness/desert for Jesus' testing.

Why the desert?

In Matthew chapter 3, we discussed how Jesus must *fulfill all righteousness*.

We also talked about how Jesus is the second/new Adam.

Jesus' life is vicarious—meaning that Jesus must accomplish what Adam and Israel failed to do.

So this series of temptations that Jesus experiences is a do-over for all of mankind.

If we go back to the creation story, we'll remember that Satan met Adam in The Garden of Eden.

Eden was paradise.

God provided everything!

And nothing could harm Adam and Eve either.

That is until a talking snake shows up on the scene.

Adam lost his battle with Satan—and here's the thing to consider.

Adam lost this battle while living in the perfect environment.

Jesus, on the other hand, meets Satan in the desert.

It's the complete opposite.

We know all about the desert. We live in The Verde Valley.

When you go on a long hike, do you bring some food and water? Of course.

The deserts of Israel are hot, barren, and desolate.

This particular area where Jesus is being tempted is known as "The Devastation."

If I'm driving down a highway and see a sign that says, "The Devastation two miles," I turn around.

This desert had hills that were like giant piles of dust.

7 miles East in your eyes, nose, mouth

The rocks are sharp and jagged. *Easily fall & get hurt.*

Nowhere in Israel could Jesus have been more alone and vulnerable.

So notice the contrast.

Adam and Eve were in paradise—where everything was so lush, full, and green we cannot conceive of it today.

Jesus, on the other hand, was in the lifeless desert of Judah—where everything was dead and brown.

Adam and Eve were physically content and satisfied.

They weren't even hungry when they ate the fruit!

They were free to eat from ^{100's of} any trees in the garden, except for one.

Jesus didn't have the one
Jesus was hungry, having fasted for forty days and forty nights.

Adam and Eve were together.

They had each other for company and support.

Jesus was utterly alone and isolated.

Regardless of how much Adam and Eve had going for them, they failed their temptation.

KEYPOINT #1:

Spiritual and moral failure is not caused by circumstances but by character.

You and me, we're really good at playing the blame game.

We live in a society that thrives by pointing fingers at one another and not taking responsibility.

But, we are responsible and morally accountable to God for how we live our lives.

And Jesus shows what that looks like.

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

Let's talk about temptation.

In English, the word *tempt* means— "tempt to do evil."

But The Greek word for "tempted" in this verse is *peirasmós* (per-ahz-mos).

Peirasmós (per-ahz-mos).— "to test or prove."

Remember Abraham's test?

Abraham was called to sacrifice his son Isaac. That's quite the test.

Job also comes to mind.

Job was tested repeatedly for his faith in God.

When we think of the outcome of these tests, we know that God used those things not to destroy, not to shame, not to embarrass these men,

but to build them up into the men that God created them to be.

KEYPOINT #2:

Peirasmós (per-ahz-mos) is a neutral word that can be used as a testing for good or a temptation for evil.

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

God never tempts anyone.

+ **James 1:13**—No one undergoing a trial should say, "I am being tempted by God," since God is not tempted by evil, and he himself doesn't tempt anyone.

James uses the root word *peirasmós* in the form of a test—three times in this verse.

Now From Satan's perspective, ~~however,~~ ^{*PEIRASMOS*} it's always a temptation.

Same word but used for wickedness.

Satan is a thief...and God's Word gives us Satan's mission statement.

+ **John 10:10**— A thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.

In other words, when you experience a spiritual battle that rages around you in a test, trial, or temptation...

There are two powers at work.

God and Satan.

And here's how we should look at all this—even though we can't see with our own eyes.

God provides an opportunity to prove that you are growing and maturing in your faith by offering a test.

But from Satan's standpoint, it's a temptation to trap or trick you into sin.

Satan intends that your trial ends in evil.

While God intends it for good.

There can be no better example of this than Joseph with his brothers in Genesis 50.

Joseph is Jacob's favorite son, and Joe's brothers know this.

They get jealous and nearly kill him but decide a better plan is to sell him as a slave and then lie about the whole thing to their father.

Joseph works himself from a slave to the VP of Egypt.

Decades later, his brother's come to Egypt asking for food because there's a famine.

The brothers eventually find out who Joseph is, and they think Joe is going to kill them, but he says this...

Genesis 50:19—*But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God?"*

Genesis 50:20—*You planned evil against me; God planned it for good to bring about the present result—the survival of many people.*

Wow. Dang!

The issue with 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, then it's a temptation in which I was enticed by my own wickedness and chose to sin.

James 1:14—*But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desire.*

“The devil made me do it” is not in Scripture.

So back to Jesus in today’s narrative...

When the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the desert, it was a test designed to prove that Jesus truly is God’s Son.

God the Father confirmed it audibly! How much more confirmation do you need?

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

But now Jesus needed to prove why God the Father was well pleased Him.

The test was that Jesus would remain obedient—regardless of His human needs and desires.

But that is only from God’s point of view!

From Satan’s point of view, this whole thing is a temptation.

Now the thought of Jesus being tempted like we are should bring us great comfort.

Look at this.

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

And here’s the most amazing thing.

Not only was Jesus tempted in every way, but He was tempted to the absolute highest limit of temptation.

Slide: Think of temptation levels on a scale from one to ten.

Before we knew the Lord Jesus as our Savior,

When temptation comes, we would cave in at levels 1 or 2.

Why? Because as unbelievers, we love sin.

But, when we became Believers, things changed, didn't they?

Now when a trial, a test, or temptation comes, we push back/resist, don't we?

At least we try.

We now have the Holy Spirit leading, guiding, warning, and protecting us.

When the Holy Spirit says, "Don't do that!"

He's saying, "Don't hurt yourself."

I love you too much to watch you hurt yourself.

So the Christian life is lived by learning from our failures with temptation.

We go from caving in to temptation from a 1 or 2 on that scale to 5, 6, and 7 over a long period of time.

But when it comes to Jesus, Jesus never gave into temptation. Not once.

As the Son of Man, Jesus did what Adam could not do.

So Jesus experienced tests/temptations that eventually reached level ten.

Jesus was tested and tempted at the highest level a human can bear.

-struggles
And Jesus passed each test perfectly, every single time.

This is most apparent in the Garden of Gethsemane—where Jesus is sweating drops of blood because of the temptation to bypass the cross.

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

So we know that the Holy Spirit is leading Jesus into the desert, but it's the devil who tempts Him.

Timeout!

Does this scenario remind you of another godly man where God told Satan, you can have him?

Job 1:6—One day, the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them.

Job 1:7—The Lord asked Satan, "Where have you come from?" "From roaming through the earth," Satan answered him, "and walking around on it."

Job 1:8—Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? No one else on earth is like him, a man of perfect integrity, who fears God and turns away from evil."

Job 1:9—Satan answered the Lord, "Does Job fear God for nothing?"

Job 1:10—Haven't you placed a hedge around him, his household, and everything he owns? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.

Job 1:11— *But stretch out your hand and strike everything he owns, and he will surely curse you to your face."*

Job 1:12— *"Very well," the Lord told Satan, "everything he owns is in your power. However, do not lay a hand on Job himself." So Satan left the Lord's presence.*

Job's story will wreck your theology if you believe that God never allows bad things to happen in our life.

"Why do bad things happen to good people?"

Answer:

1. There's no one good, not one. (Romans 3:12)
2. We must understand the terms that we toss around.

-our hearts secretly wicked.

Testing is not a bad thing—God uses it for good.

That is, if you let Him.

That's a key to understanding today's text.

Am I going to cooperate with God in my own life?

Because temptation is the biggest problem for us, who are Christians.

key point #3
If we eliminate temptation— we eliminate sin in our lives.

The problem, however, is that we still like to sin.

Scripture confirms it in Hebrews 11:25.

We as humans—even baby Christians— need very little encouragement to sin.

But when we sin...

KEYPOINT #3:

We must be cautious when blaming God or crediting the devil when we fall into temptation.

The devil didn't make us do it—we choose to sin. (James 1:13)

And the reason we choose to sin is that we get something out of it.

If we didn't get something out of it, we wouldn't sin.

Now, Christ is a different story.

These three temptations that we will study over the next three weeks differ from our temptations in several ways.

1. Jesus doesn't have an inward sinful nature.

So His temptations don't come from within himself like ours, but Jesus' temptations come from outside.

Regardless, the temptation—is very for Jesus.

Could Jesus have sinned? We'll answer that question next week?

2. Jesus' temptations are specific to Him.

You and I will not be tempted to turn stones into bread, jump off the Temple in Jerusalem, or physically worship Satan.

But we all know what our temptations are.

What does this Temptation Narrative tell us so far?

It tells us that we can expect the same if you are a Christian.

You will be tested & tempted - but you won't know which until you experience the outcome

There is no room for health, wealth, and prosperity theology in a Christian's life.

As Christians, we are to live a life of self-denial.

We are to expect suffering, trials, and temptations.

Here's the thing, this is not because God doesn't like us or love us.

It is because He does.

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

Notice how personal this event is.

Matthew presents verse one as an actual event.

Jesus is not having a vision.

Verse one is not a parable.

We are seeing Jesus, as the Son of Man—a human being just like you and me—having a very real conversation with the devil, as the deceiver.

Jesus was a man born of a woman.

While the devil was in the form of a man.

So let's talk about the devil.

“Devil” is the Greek form of *diabolos*. *dee-ob-los*

“Satan” is the Hebrew form.


Both words mean accuser/slanderer,

Scripture teaches that the devil is a created being.

And because the devil is a created being, he is not equal to His Creator.

Martin Luther said that the devil is the devil, yes, but he’s God’s devil.

Jesus, who created all things, said this about Satan (Col 1:16)

 **Luke 10:18**— *He said to them, “I watched Satan fall from heaven like lightning.*

Satan’s fall from heaven is symbolically described in Isaiah 14:12–14 and Ezekiel 28:12–18.

So Satan was cast out of heaven.

He was ejected and expelled.

Now, ^{All} many of us have felt rejection in our lives.

How happy are you when you’ve been rejected...even though you know you’re wrong?

Satan was cast out of heaven, so he is filled with fury and envy.

And that fury and hatred is directed against God and his people.

Many people, including some Christians, do not believe in a real Satan.

However, the Satan is not a “Christian” invention.

And here in this text, we see clearly see that.

Satan has never revealed his character more so than he did with tempting Jesus.

The devil's single purpose is to usurp and overthrow the place of God.

Like a thief, the devil's mission statement is to steal, kill and destroy. (John 10:10)

And we're going to see Satan try to work his mission statement into these temptations of Jesus over the next three weeks.

PREACH:

WHAT DO YOU THINK THIS is? Take a close look . . .

Let me introduce you to a *Tardigrade*.

It's also known as a water bear or moss piglet.

Tardigrades are microscopic, water-dwelling animals with eight legs.

Tardigrades can survive temperatures from as low as -459°F to as high as 303°F

(That's 1,000 times more radiation than other animals).

Tardigrades can also live almost a decade without water.

Even more impressive, in September 2007, Tardigrades were taken into orbit on the FOTON-M3 space mission and were exposed to space for ten days.

After they were returned to earth, it was discovered that many of them not only survived, but also had laid eggs that hatched normally.

Tardigrades are the only animals known to be able to survive the vacuum of space!

When it comes to temptation, your trials in life are like a tardigrade.

No matter what you've tried to do to resolve the trials, the temptations, and the tests in your life... that dang tardigrade keeps coming back into your life.

Much more can be said, and we'll get to all of it over the next three weeks.

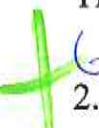
But for now, let's finish the thought of how to ^{prepare} resist temptation biblically.

When you learn how to ^{prepare} resist sin biblically, you're learning how to build spiritual muscle slowly over time.



1. *Putting on the full armor of God* (Eph. 6:10-20) speaks to spending time with the Lord by reading, listening, and meditating on His Word during your devotional time.

This is a scheduled time of preparation between you and the Lord.



^{God's work now God's people}
2. Staying connected to your Church family.

Making new friends and ^{As God grows the church} depending on the relationships that you currently have.

^{dear friends,} ^{Perseus} ^{deepening}
The test is coming for you. You're not going to stop it, but you can learn how to resist it correctly.



PRAY:

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DICTIONARIES | ENCYCLOPEDIAS:

MEDIA:

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Satan-fall.html>

SERMONS:

Tom Nelson, Matthew 4:1-11, Denton Bible Church

<https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/1205/how-to-overcome-temptation>

<https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/2191/the-crisis-of-temptation-part-1>

<https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/2192/the-crisis-of-temptation-part-2>

Members Meeting
4-24-2022

VISION:

Teach and preach verse-by-verse so that you can experience God day-by-day.

Financial Update:

\$47, 282.00 in our checking account.

Dr. Cameron Wold Update:

- He is currently in the process of selling his home in Scottsdale
- Open House.
- Please pray for a rental home here in Cottonwood in 45-60 days. Cam needs housing ASAP!
- If you know of a rental home, let me know.

Small Groups:

- Sunday School—Ray Taylor | Hebrews | Sunday from 8:00-9:00am
- Women's Group—Amy & Bev | Wednesdays 2-3:30 pm in our home.
 - Book: [Alone With God](#) by John MacArthur
 - Rediscovering the Power and Passion of Prayer
- Men's Group—Brad Kesler | Sunday Nights @ 6:00pm | Becoming The Man
- Starting May 11 Wednesday Night @ 6:00pm | Turn Everyday Conversations into Gospel Conversations.

Preparedness:

We want you to know that we as the leadership of the church are making preparedness plans for the immediate future.

- Inflation is turning to hyper inflation
- Digital currency is ready for implementation to track all spending
- Real possibility of electricity going off the grid.
- Cell towers going down—which means normal communication will be cut off.

In case of an emergency—and we lose power or cell service, —there's not way for us to communciate—we are asking you to meet us the very next Saturday at 10:00am.

Power or not, we'll continue to have Sunday Services.

It's important that if/when we go through national crisis—that we go through it as church family.

We'll meet at 10:00am on Saturday's to make sure everyone is okay.

We are investing in HAM radios and an antenna to communicate with one another.

We don't need need cell service.

In the meantime, and to prepare for a crisis. God's Word talks a lot about wisdom in practical matters.

- Pray! Country, City, Church.
- Stock up on water or water purification system. Berkie.
- Stock up on food. Your money is not going to do you any good when grocery stores runs out of food.
- We are not going to turn into a food bank.
- Don't think that just because you know someone who has food, please know that there not going to just give it to you.
- Don't have all your money in the bank—Have cash on hand in small bills.
- Think trade/Barter
- Stock up on your medications/prescriptions
- If you are a gun owner make sure you know how to use it and when to use it.
- Remember that desperate people do desperate things.
- There are millions of people in Phoenix with no plan. They could easily come north and overwhelm Cottonwood.
- Not trying to scare anybody but this is the new reality that we live in.

Apartment Life:



We have a special opportunity to team up and minister the Gospel with two apartment complexes in town: Rio Verde and Sagewood.

Did you guys know that 92% of people who live in apartments are unsaved and don't have a church family?

SHOW VIDEO:

So I want to plan a seed this morning.

Pray for this opportunity to minister to these people who live in Rio Verde and Sagewood.

There are several hundred people who live in these apartments.

This could be a way for us as RBC to fulfill the Great Commission.

There are many ways for us to get involved in this kind of ministry.

- Pray for the communities and the souls who live in these apartments.
- All of you artists: Card ministry
- All of you cooks: to prepare meals
- Residential care:
 - Welcome visit to people who have moved in—move in packages
 - or to visit people and bring them a meal.
- Events: Extraverts who love parties.
 - We have the opportunity to put on two events per month.
 - Each event is around 90 minutes.
 - Two or three people per event.
 - Each event is relationship based—this is not street evangelism, but becoming friends with people.
 - If they ask about Jesus, tell them—if not, talk about sports.

The coolest thing about this opportunity is that it came out of nowhere.

It came out of left field about three months ago—and it sounds a lot like God if you ask me.

So all that to say, pray on this opportunity.

Castly - Ace Jaros



Meal-Packing For Ukraine Volunteer Event Details



Over 10 million people have been displaced from their homes in Ukraine. We can help.

June 25th, 2022

Verde Valley Christian Church

406 S. 6th Street

Cottonwood, AZ 86326

2-hour volunteer shifts assigned after registration deadline

Registration Deadline: May 31st, 2022

Adults 16 Years Old or Older: \$50

Children 10 - 15 Years Old: \$30

Must be at least 10 years old to participate.

Children must be accompanied by an adult.

This is a first-come, first-served opportunity.

**Questions? Contact Karen Freeman, International Outreach Coordinator, at
karen@manzanitaoutreach.org.**

Register at: ManzanitaOutreach.org

Cooful Me

Start w/ UKRAINE for MettCA

*Don't believe what
you see on the news
Biggest displacement
for WW II*

What's App - To use.
Two Easles - Greek Orthodox & Protestant