

The Temptation of Jesus
Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13

Introduction

Temptation is a normal part of human life. Everyone faces it every day. There may be some general similarities in what is tempting according to gender, social class and social background, but it will also vary widely from person to person in both type and degree. Some people will be tempted by what are gross and obvious sins such as armed robbery, sexual perversion, drunkenness, drug abuse, abuse of children, acts of violence and murder. For others, such things are not in the least enticing while they are tempted by less obvious and more acceptable sins such as covetousness, greed, cheating on taxes, petty larceny, jealousy, hatred, boasting, lying, gossip, and gluttony.

Regardless of the particular temptation there are two things true about all temptation. First, whether the temptation is to do something acceptable to society (materialism, cheating the government and insurance companies) or unacceptable (terrorism), all temptation is an enticement to “*do wrong by promise of pleasure or gain*” (Webster). God is the one that defines what is wrong and He calls it sin. Temptation is the enticement to fulfill your own desires by some means unacceptable to God.

Second, while the particular manner in which a temptation is overcome will vary, all victory over temptation will require you to trust and obey God. Sometimes that will mean avoiding or fleeing from the situation, and sometimes it will mean remaining in the situation and being steadfast. Regardless of the particular situation, victory over temptation to sin comes through obedience to God.

This morning we are going to examine the greatest example of victory over temptation. Please turn in your Bibles to Matthew 4:1-11. Hebrews 4:15 explains that Jesus is a high priest that can sympathize with our weakness because He was “*tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.*” His example shows us how we can also have victory.

The Timing - Matthew 4:1, Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1

¹ *Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.* ² *And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.*

Matthew introduces this section with the simple time reference of “then” showing that this event occurs after Jesus’ was baptized. Mark 1:2 and Luke 4:1 give us more detail that it was immediately after Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan river that the Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness for forty days and nights.

Jesus baptism was in a sense His “coronation.” The Messiah had come and God the Father bestowed His blessing upon Him saying “*this is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.*” In addition, Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit for His public ministry. (See: *The Baptism of Jesus*). The coming of the Holy Spirit was crucial.

It must be kept in mind that Jesus is both man and God in one person. I often describe Jesus as the only 200% person for He is both 100% man and 100% God. He is one person with two distinct natures, both man and God, with neither nature mixed or fused together. In theology we call this the hypostatic union. It is the humanity of Jesus that is in need of the anointing, empowering and leading of the Holy Spirit. This is why Jesus is a real and wholly applicable example to us in how we are to live our lives. Many people discount Jesus’ example in overcoming temptation by simply saying that He could do it because He was God and could not sin. They forget that Jesus was also human and actually overcame temptation the same way in which we must do so. He trusted God and obeyed Him by the power of the Holy Spirit. Note that it is the Spirit that is leading Jesus. The Spirit remained with Jesus even through the temptations.

The promise is given to every true Christian that the Holy Spirit will also remain with us throughout our lives. We are baptized by the Spirit into Christ's body at salvation (1 Corinthians 12:13). The Spirit then indwells us (Romans 8:9; James 4:5) as the seal of God's promises (Ephesians 1:3), and He teaches us the ways of God (1 John 2:27) while empowering us to live for Him (Ephesians 3:16). We can overcome the temptations that we face in the same manner in which Jesus overcame the temptations placed before Him by the devil.

Led To Be Tempted - Matthew 4:1, Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1

Next, note that the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness for the specific purpose of being tempted by the devil. God is sovereign in the matter. This did not happen by chance, fate or bad luck. The devil neither arranged this nor did he stumble upon it to take advantage of it. God the Spirit leads God the Son into the wilderness to face the adversary. The devil will do all that He can to tempt Jesus, but from God's point of view this will be a test that will prove Jesus' character. Let me expand on that idea.

It is common even for Christians to blame God for their sin reasoning that since God is sovereign, then He could have prevented the situation in which the temptation to sin occurred. True, He can do that and often does (Job 1:10), but there are three reasons that neither God nor the circumstances are the source of the temptation or any sin that results. First, James 1:13 plainly states that God is not the source of any temptation, ¹³ *Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.*

Second, 1 Corinthians 10:13 plainly states that God always provides a means by which any temptation can be either overcome or endured, ¹³ *No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.* Whatever your circumstances may be, God will limit them to be within what you will be able to resist or will provide a means to escape it. Though you may feel at times that the circumstances are overwhelming and that you have no choice but yield to sin, that is simply not true. You always have a choice and there will always be a means by which you can either escape or endure.

What then is the source of temptation? James 1:14 states, *"But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust."* The term "lust" here is simply a Greek term for "strong desire." The source of temptation is actually within yourself. The means of enticement may be the immediate situation, other people or even the devil or one of his demons, but they are only playing upon something within you - your own desires.

Now carefully note here that being tempted is not itself sin. Being enticed to fulfill a strong desire is not itself sin. It is was sinful for the devil to tempt Jesus, and it is just as sinful for humans to tempt other people. However, Jesus did not sin because He was tempted by the devil, and you do not sin just because a temptation is presented to you. James 1:15 explains, *"Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death."* It is not until the strong desires within you have conceived into coveting that sin occurs and its actions will eventually result in death.

The Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Why? What was to be accomplished? There is a flip side to every temptation. It is also a testing of faith. What the devil and men intend for evil is used by God for good. Temptation will test your faith and demonstrate what you actually believe by your reaction to it. James 1:2-4 explains, ² *Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,* ³ *knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.* ⁴ *And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.* When your faith is tested you are challenged to put your trust in God into action and you prove what you actually believe. The temptation of Jesus by the devil was used by God to prove Jesus' character and identity. God uses the testing of your faith to bring you to spiritual maturity.

The Reality of the Devil - Matthew 4:1, Mark 1:13; Luke 4:2

Another point that needs to be brought out from this verse is that the devil is real. Throughout this text Jesus has a personal conversation with a real person, not a fairy tale figure of a guy with a red suit, a long pointed tail, two horns and carrying a pitchfork, nor a “*principle of evil*.” The devil, which means “slanderer,” is a real and personal being that goes by many other names including the “*tempter*” (Matthew 4:3), “*Satan*,” which means “adversary” (Mark 1:13), “*Abaddon and Apollyon*,” a reference to him as the destroyer (Revelation 9:11), “*the serpent of old*” (Revelation 12:9), the “*god of this world*” (2 Corinthians 4:4) and the “*prince of the power of the air*” (Ephesians 2:2). He is a fallen angel that seeks to usurp God’s glory and honor and take it for himself (Isaiah 14:12-14). He is an evil being with evil desires described in 1 Peter 5:8 as a “*roaring lion seeking whom he may devour*.” If you are in Christ, you need not fear the devil, but you do need to be aware of him lest he sift you like wheat (Luke 22:31). We are to “*Submit to God, Resist the Devil and he will flee from you*” (James 4:7).

Why take this time to stress this point that the devil is a real person? It corrects those who foolishly deny it while bringing us back to the nature of a real battle in which we are engaged. We have an adversary that knows us and our weak areas by his observation of mankind and of you as an individual. The devil and the angels that follow him will seek to exploit your weaknesses in their efforts to move you away from God. Ephesians 6:12 explains that “*our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.*”

There are two aspects to the activity of Satan and his demons. First, there is an overt side in which their activity is obvious. That would include occult activities such as apparitions, levitations, black and white magic, healings, automatic writing, channeling, etc. These things really do occur, and will continue to increase as our nation slides farther away from its Biblical moorings. They may be scary because they are supernatural, but because they are overt, the danger is recognized and we guard ourselves against it. We are much more defensive when we recognize the dangers we are facing.

Much more dangerous is the subtle side of spiritual warfare. The devil is a crafty and deceitful schemer. To stand firm against his efforts we must put on the full armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-17 ; See: Spiritual Warfare Sermons). The temptations he presents can come from unexpected sources and can be disguised as something that appears to be good. Paul warns in 2 Corinthians 11:14 that Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. The devil is a master at scripture twisting, the source of all sorts of false doctrine, the father of lies and he manipulates people to do his dirty work. In Matthew 16:23 we even find Jesus rebuking Peter telling him, “*get behind me, Satan!*” after Peter tried to discourage Jesus from going to the cross.

If we want to be able to overcome temptation, there is no better place to start than following the example of Jesus. The life of a Christian is to be patterned on the life of Christ, and God’s work in us is to conform us into His image. Jesus’ response to Satan’s efforts to tempt Him shows us how we can also have victory over every form of temptation whether it is overt or subtle and regardless of its source.

The Setting - Matthew 4:2; Mark 1:13; Luke 4:2

Matthew 4:2 continues, “*And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.*” Jesus had been forty days out in the wilderness. Mark 1:13 describes this as being “*with the wild beasts.*” The Judean wilderness is a harsh environment. It is dry with little vegetation and steep hills, but those qualities also made it a good place for solitude, thinking and praying. Those who have been out in the desert alone as I have know this by their own experience. You are secluded by its immensity, and at night, the vast panorama of stars that seem close enough to touch inspire you to say to God along with the Psalmist, “*What is man, that Thou dost take thought of him? And the son of man, that Thou dost take care of him?*” (Psalm 8:4).

Our text states that Jesus had fasted for forty days and nights. There are many types of fasts recorded in Scripture. Luke 4:2 stresses the point that in this one *“He at nothing during those days, and when they ended, He became hungry.”* This was a long fast without food similar to that experienced by Moses (Exodus 34:28) and Elijah (1 Kings 19:8). The purpose of the fast is not specifically recorded, but it seems best to see it as part of His preparation for ministry. Times of intense prayer were often accompanied by fasting. To say that Jesus was hungry after such a long fast is an understatement. A fast that long would also have left Jesus physically weak. Luke 4:2 indicates that Satan may have been trying to tempt Jesus throughout the forty days in the wilderness, but this is now the opportune time for the devil to take advantage of the situation.

The Temptation of the Flesh - Matthew 4:3-4; Luke 4:3-4

3 *“And the tempter came and said to Him, ‘If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.’”*

The term used for Satan here (διαβολος / diabolos) is translated as “tempter” in most English versions as a way to emphasize what he is doing. However, the same word is translated “devil” in verse 1 and it can also be translated as adversary and slanderer. All the connotations of the term become evident in the devil’s attempt to get Jesus to fall into sin. He opposes Jesus and so is His adversary. He seeks to entice Jesus to fulfill His desires in ways that are not acceptable to God. He slanders both Jesus and God the Father in the process.

The first area of temptation is the most logical place to attack given how hungry Jesus would be after forty days without anything to eat. The devil comes and strives to entice Jesus in the area of his humanity of physical flesh by telling Him to turn stones into bread and satisfy His hunger. As long as Jesus’ committed time for fasting was over, it would not be sinful for Him to eat something. The temptation here is not in having something to eat, it is the manner in which the food would be gained. Notice how the tempter’s question is phrased. It is subtle, but it calls into question both Jesus being the Son of God and the Father’s care for Him.

The Greek conditional phrase used here assumes Jesus is the Son of God, and the devil has no doubts about Jesus’ identity, but the challenge is put forth for Jesus to prove the truth of His claim by turning the rocks into bread and feeding Himself. There is also subtle slander against God the Father. The premise of Satan’s challenge is an attack on the trustworthiness of God the Father. Isaiah 33:16 says of the righteous that *“His bread will be given him; his water will be sure.”* Satan is questioning God’s character based on the fact that Jesus was hungry. The essence of the tempter’s challenge to Jesus is *“You are hungry because God has not provided for You, so take charge and provide for Yourself and so prove your claim to be the Son of God.”* The temptation is for Jesus to satisfy the desires of His physical body though His own means and methods rather than relying upon God to provide at the proper time and in a proper way.

Jesus responded by quoting Deuteronomy 8:3, *But He answered and said, ‘It is written, ‘MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.’”* Jesus came to do the Father’s will even saying in John 4:34 that *“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work.”* Jesus puts His body in subjection to God and in complete trust would wait for His provision.

Satan comes against us with temptations to the lust of the flesh (1 John 2:16). He calls into question God’s character and tempts us to fulfill our physical desires by our own means and methods instead of being obedient to Him. The devil’s slander is *“If God is so good and knows your needs, how come He has not given you those things you need?”* Satan wants us to doubt God, take our eyes off of Him, and then seek to get what we need our own way instead of God’s way.

There are many specific types of temptations to the lusts of the flesh. A person who is very hungry may be tempted to lie and steal in order to get food to eat. That is not a common problem in this country

for even our poor have access to plenty of food. But in a time of economic downturn, there can be worry over being able to work and pay all the bills. Such worry makes it easy to fall to the temptation to violate God's commandments in order to get or keep a job.

Let me be direct. Scripture commands, *"Be anxious for nothing (do not worry), but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God, And the peace of God which passes all understanding will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 4:6,7). Isaiah 26:3 adds, *"Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusteth in Thee."* Our first response should be to pray and trust God which is then demonstrated by obedience to Him. If you are worried about the future, then you have forgotten the promise of God in Matthew 6:33 that He will provide for your physical needs of food, clothing, and shelter if you will seek first His kingdom and His righteousness. That worry is sin and the devil is already beating you and he will continue to lead you astray if you let him.

The temptation does not have to be for a need. It can also be just for a want. We have a need for food, but more often the temptation is toward what we desire and not just what we need. Satan used this against Eve in Genesis 3 when he tempted her to eat of the forbidden Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Eve could eat from any tree in the garden except that one, so there was no lack for food. Yet, the devil was successful in tempting her by contradicting God's warning and slandering God's character claiming that He was withholding something good from her. Eve saw that *"it was good for food"* and so coveted it despite God's warning and the abundance of food He had already provided.

There are many other areas of the lust of the flesh. Human sexuality is a gift from God that enables mankind to continue through procreation and increases the intimacy and pleasure of the married couple. However, Satan's lies have filled our society with a belief that a person must be sexually active in order to be fulfilled in life and that illicit and or perverted liaisons are the most satisfying. Both are utterly false and are dangerous to physical and emotional health, but that does not stop people from falling to temptation and even rushing to fulfill their lusts regardless of the consequences.

First, being single and celibate can and should be very fulfilling. Paul even argues in 1 Corinthians 7 that living in such a state has great advantages. Second, polls taken for decades have consistently shown that monogamous married couples, and especially committed Christians, are the most satisfied people in this area.

There are many dangers to falling for Satan's lies. Sexually transmitted diseases are at epidemic levels, and fornication or adultery place you a great risk of becoming infected with something that could leave you sterile, increase your risk of cancer or even kill you. These diseases are becoming more resistant to treatments.

There is also the danger of the heartache caused by searching for love but only getting sex - and possibly a disease. It is hard enough when a dating couple break up, but when sexual intimacy has been part of the relationship the break up is even worse. 1 Corinthians 6:15-18 suggests there is a tearing of the spirit when that happens.

A danger to singles is rushing to get married due to physical attraction without proper consideration of the character and qualities of the person. This is risky at best, foolish in general and sinful when a Christian marries a non-Christian because of it.

Those that are married that believe Satan's lies risk destroying their marriage and family. Most of us have seen that happen to other people. Some here have personally suffered from such infidelity. Even the idea that it could be better with someone else wrecks havoc because it creates discontentment. God's many commands concerning marriage are ignored in order to chase an illusion. Life is not about fleeting happiness but in responding properly to the truth which in turn will lead to persistent joy (Romans 5).

Contrary to our society's mad preoccupation with sexuality, 1 Corinthians 6:13 sates unequivocally that the body is not for immorality but for the Lord! 1 Thessalonians 4:3 is also direct stating, *"For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality."* Do we serve God

as creatures created in His image or do we satisfy ourselves like animals whether that is fornication prior to marriage or adultery after marriage? Sadly, professing Christians act like animals in this area about the same rate as non-Christians with a large percentage of them no longer even agreeing that pre-marital sex is morally wrong.

Yes, we all have physical needs and desires, but all of them are to be in subjection to the will of God in their fulfillment. Paul explains in Colossians 3:2-5, "*Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.*" To overcome temptations to our flesh, we must follow Jesus' example and put even the needs of our bodies in subjection to God and in complete trust wait for His provision.

The Temptation of Pride - Matthew 4:5-7; Luke 4:9-12

The devil next tempts Jesus in the area of pride by trying to get him to perform a great sign and miracle. ⁵"*Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple.*" It is not certain, but the pinnacle of the temple may have been the roof that extended out over Herod's portico. Josephus reports that the drop to the valley floor at that point was around 450 feet. Verse 6 records the devil then *said to Him, "If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'HE WILL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE CONCERNING YOU'; and 'ON THEIR HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, LEST YOU STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'*"

The devil begins this temptation the same way as the first by challenging Jesus to prove He is the "son of God." This time it is by throwing Himself down from the top of the temple. The devil, the master of Scripture twisting, even quotes portions of Psalm 91:11 & 12 in the effort to make this temptation more persuasive. How could jumping off the top of a building be a temptation? Because it would be a dramatic sign to everyone in Jerusalem that would see it that He was indeed the son of God when they saw the angels protecting Him. The temptation is for Jesus to prove Himself and gain the acclaim and following of the people by His own means and methods. In this case, a sensational act that would call attention to Himself.

Jesus responds by quoting from Deuteronomy 6:16. "*Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'*" Jesus subjects His pride to God and will wait for God to do things in His way and timing. He knows that to put God to the test only demonstrates a lack of trust in God and that is sin.

I don't think anyone here would be tempted to jump off a building so the angels could catch him, but you might be tempted to put God to the test in other ways, and there are many ways our pride can be used as a hook to lead us into sin.

We can trust God to love and care for us, but that does not mean we can live recklessly and carelessly and presume upon His grace. Don't go speeding down the highway to get some place you are going to perform some ministry presuming God will protect you from tickets and accidents. Don't presume that because you serve the Lord and pray you do not need to see the doctor or follow his directions. It is interesting that Paul traveled with Luke who was a doctor. We are to have faith in God and trust Him, but we are not to presume upon Him and put Him to the test.

The devil used Eve's pride to entice her to sin. He lied saying that God forbid her to eat of the fruit because it would make her like God knowing good and evil. One of the factors that led Eve to fall to the devil's temptation is that "*the tree was desirable to make one wise*" (Genesis 3:6). She wanted to become equal to God. The devil is still very successful with this lie and so many cults are filled with followers who think they can become gods of some sort. That includes not only the Mormons, but also those who follow the word-faith teaching of people such as Benny Hinn, Kenneth Copeland and others.

Pride was the source of Satan's fall (Ezekiel 28:12-17). Pride is a major problem for people. Proverbs 16:18 warns, *"Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before stumbling."* Proverbs 29:23 adds, *"A man's pride will bring him low, But a humble spirit will obtain honor."* Jesus overcame this temptation because He was humble and refused to put God to the test. He submitted Himself to the Father for the timing of when He would be exalted (Phil. 2:5-11). We must do the same (1 Peter 5:6).

The Temptation of the Eyes - Matthew 4:8-10; Luke 4:5-8

Satan, who is the *"prince of this world"* and the *"god of this age"* tries a third time with a temptation in the area of the lust of the eyes. Satan shows Jesus something that He would want and one day will have for Himself. ⁸*"Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; ⁹and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."*

This is not a temptation to gross and selfish materialism. Many verses tell us that Jesus will gain the world. Psalm 2:8 records that this will happen for God the Father says to the Son, *"Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Thine inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Thy possession."* Philippians 2:10 states that every knee shall bow to Him and confess that He is Lord. This is another slander against God with Satan pointing out that this had not yet happened and the nations were currently within his power. The temptation is for Jesus to gain these kingdoms immediately and avoid the pain and agony of the cross. All Jesus would have to do is give homage to Satan. The temptation is to gain something that God has promised by some short cut method.

This time Jesus responds by quoting from Deuteronomy 6:13, and He also rebukes Satan. ¹⁰*Then Jesus said to him, "Begone, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"* Jesus subjected Himself to the Father's will even knowing that it would take Him to the cross.

The temptation to find short cuts to God's promises and blessings has made the church in America very ineffective. Doctrine is compromised, worldliness has invaded and a perverted gospel is presented that caters to man's feelings instead of proclaiming God's glory. Marketing techniques are used effectively to fill churches with people who reject the true gospel. Their message is: *"Jesus is nice. Try Jesus and you will get a wonderful life now."* The true gospel proclaims that God created man for His own glory, but man's sin separates him from God so that he is spiritually dead and condemned to eternity in hell. However, God, in His great love, sent His only begotten son Jesus Christ to redeem man by paying the penalty of man's sin so that he can be forgiven and made alive again to God and fulfill his purpose of existence in giving glory to God in the present and throughout eternity. By the way, the world will hate you for believing this and following Jesus.

Individual Christians who follow this lie lack in the disciplines of prayer, Bible study and personal holiness. It is easier to read a "Christian" self-help book and follow a list of legalistic do's and don'ts than to study the Bible for yourself to know its principals and precepts and apply them to your life. Such weak Christians are also much more susceptible to the devil's enticements to the materialism of our society and that is dangerous. If the devil could use the lust of the eyes - the beauty of the fruit - to entice Eve to sin while she was still innocent and in the Garden of Eden, how much more effective will he be in using the same kind of temptations to lead Christians who must fight against a sin nature and live in a sinful society?

Jesus overcame all the temptations the devil placed before Him resulting in verse 11. *"Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him."* James 4:7 tells us, *"Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."* That is what Jesus did and so the devil fled. The Father then sent His angels to minister to Jesus for it was then the right time.

Conclusions

Everyone will be tempted. You will be enticed to evil by the devil, the world and your own desires. Those temptations may be flagrant or very subtle, but they will come. Slander will be made against God's character that He has not provided, has not fulfilled His promises and in some way has been holding back on you. You need to be prepared to overcome the lies, the slander, the emotions and your own desires. You can have victory over the temptations that come upon you if you will follow Jesus' example. It is therefore imperative that you understand that Jesus did not defeat Satan by quoting Scripture. Jesus defeated the devil by knowing the Scriptures and being humble to obey them. We memorize Bible verses as a method of learning it well enough to obey what it says at all times (Psalm 119:9-11). Memorization of Scripture without diligence to apply it to your life will not protect you from temptation to sin. You must be resolved to follow the truth of the word of God by the power of the Holy Spirit rather than desire, emotion and expediency.

Do you know the truth well enough that you can stand firm when the deceptions come? Can you stand strong when your emotions are in confusion and seeking to lead you astray? Can you be steadfast when the desires are strong and the devil's lies and slander make it seem reasonable to fulfill those desires your way instead of God's way? Will temptation be for you a testing of your faith that makes you stronger and more mature, or the path to sin and defeat? Here are four things you need to do so that you can have victory.

1. You need to be following Jesus Christ. There cannot be victory over the devil without having Jesus as your Lord and Savior.

2. Be diligent in your own time of personal prayer and Bible study. Knowledge of God's word and walking in the Spirit are the foundations for victory over temptation.

3. Take advantage of opportunities to learn the Word of God with other believers. They can explain what you don't understand

4. Join in worship of God and fellowship with other believers. They will both encourage and admonish you in obeying God.

Sermon Notes - 5/5/2013

The Temptation of Jesus - Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13

Introduction

Temptation is a _____ part of human life and it varies in type and intensity

Temptation is the enticement to fulfill our own _____ by some means unacceptable to God

Victory over temptation will require you to trust and _____ God

The Timing - Matthew 4:1, Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1

The temptation occurs immediately after Jesus' _____ when the Spirit led Him into the wilderness

At His baptism, Jesus received the _____ blessing and the anointing of the Spirit

Jesus is 100% God and 100% man without mixture or fusion - the _____ union

Jesus in His humanity overcame temptation the _____ in which we must - humbly trust & obey God

The Spirit _____ and ministers to every believer (1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 8:9; Eph. 1:3; 3:16; 1 John 2:27)

Led To Be Tempted - Matthew 4:1, Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1

Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness with the specific purpose that He would be _____ by the devil

_____ is not tempted nor does He tempt anyone - James 1:13

God does not allow overwhelming temptation and always provides a means of _____ - 1 Corinthians 10:13

Regardless of the means of enticement, temptation is always toward your own _____ - James 1:14

Temptation itself is not sin, but sin is birthed when lust _____ - James 1:15

The flip side of temptation is a _____ of your faith that will make you stronger and more mature - James 1:2-4

The Reality of the Devil - Matthew 4:1, Mark 1:13; Luke 4:2

The devil is a _____ person, not a fairy tale figure or the "principle of evil"

Christians need not _____ the devil, but we do need to be aware of him and prepare for his attacks - James 4:7

We are in a spiritual war and the devil and his demons will seek to _____ your weaknesses - Eph. 6:10-17

Satan's activity can be _____ - occultic activities - which make us aware of the danger

Satan is a crafty deceitful schemer who attacks us _____ even disguising himself as an angel of light

Jesus' _____ is the best place to start to learn how to overcome temptation and have victory over the devil

The Setting - Matthew 4:2; Mark 1:13; Luke 4:2

Jesus spent forty days in the Judean wilderness - a good place for _____, thinking and praying

Jesus did not eat anything during that time and was now _____

The Temptation of the Flesh - Matthew 4:3-4; Luke 4:3-4

Satan is the διαβολος / diabolos = devil, _____, adversary, slanderer

Because Jesus is hungry, the devil tempts Jesus in the area of His _____ body

The temptation here is not in having something to eat, it is the _____ in which the food would be gained

The devil knows Jesus' identity, but challenges Him to _____ it

Satan is also challenging God's _____ for not already providing for Jesus' physical hunger

The temptation is for Jesus to satisfy his physical desires by His _____ rather than relying upon God

Jesus responded by quoting Deuteronomy 8:3 - Jesus' food was to do the _____ of God (John 4:34)

Satan will _____ God's character and tempt you with the desires of your flesh

Believers need not worry about the physical necessities of life - God will _____ - Matt. 6:25-24; Phil. 4:6-7

The temptation can be for what is _____, not just a need - Satan tempted Eve in this manner (Genesis 3)

People are tempted to illicit and perverted sex because they believe Satan's _____

Being single and celibate can and should be a very _____ life - see 1 Corinthians 7

Married monogamous couples are more satisfied and they don't risk getting a _____

The heartache of searching for love but only getting sex - and possibly a disease - is _____

Marriage without _____ consideration is risky at best, foolish in general and sinful when unequally yoked

Believing Satan's lies leads to discontentment and the _____ of marriages and families

The physical body is for the _____, not immorality - 1 Corinthians 6:13

We must subject our physical needs and desires to the will of _____ for their fulfillment - Colossians 3:2-5

The Temptation of Pride - Matthew 4:5-7; Luke 4:9-12

The devil challenges Jesus to _____ He is the Son of God by throwing Himself off the pinnacle of the temple

The temptation is for Jesus to prove Himself and gain _____ acclaim by a sensational act

Jesus responds by quoting from Deuteronomy _____

We can be confident in God's love and care, but we are not to be reckless and _____ upon His grace

The devil used Eve's _____ to entice her to sin - Genesis 3:6

_____ was the source of Satan's fall (Ezekiel 28:12-17) and is a major problem for people - Proverbs 16:18

Follow Jesus' _____ example in submitting to the Father & letting Him exalt us (Phil. 2:5-11; 1 Pet. 5:6)

The Temptation of the Eyes - Matthew 4:8-10; Luke 4:5-8

Satan tries to _____ Jesus with what He would want & will eventually be His - Psalm 2:8, Phil. 2:10

The temptation is to gain the kingdoms immediately _____ having to endure the cross

Jesus responds by quoting from Deuteronomy _____

Looking for _____ to God's promises and blessings has made the church ineffective

Churches have compromised doctrine, invited in worldliness and _____ the gospel

Individual Christians lack in the disciplines of personal prayer, Bible study and _____

Jesus submitted to God and the devil _____ (James 4:7)

Conclusions

The devil will slander God and you will be tempted so you must be _____

Jesus defeated the devil by knowing the Scriptures and _____ them - not by memorizing & quoting them

Temptation will either test your faith making you stronger & more mature or lead you into _____ & defeat

KIDS CORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help.

Young Children - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. **Older Children** - Do one or more of the following: 1) Write down all the verses mentioned in the sermon and look them up later. 2) Count how many times the word "tempt" or "entice" is said. Talk with your parents about how you can be victorious over temptation

THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. What is temptation? Why is Jesus a real and applicable example to us in how to overcome temptation? What is the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer? Give three reasons God cannot be blamed either temptation or your sin. What is the relationship of temptation and sin? Of temptation and spiritual growth? Why is it important to believe the devil is a real person? Why is overt demonic activity not as dangerous as their subtle schemes? What is the setting of Jesus' temptation? How did the devil tempt Jesus in the areas of His flesh? His pride? His eyes? How are you tempted in the same areas? How did Jesus overcome those temptations? Be specific. How can you overcome temptation? Be specific. What needs to change in your life to be better able to overcome temptation?