**Tempted**

*Matthew 4:1-11*

**Introduction**

1. Temptations are a constant plight of life under the sun.
2. All must face temptations, and know that God expects us to endure them, and remain faithful.
3. We cannot do this without Christ. He shows us the way.
4. The Christian and Temptation
5. God Allows Us to be Tempted – **James 1:13** (does not tempt); **1 Corinthians 10:13** (allows us to be tempted)
6. The Tempter is Real – **Job 1:7; 1 Peter 5:8** (real person, active); **2 Corinthians 2:11** (not left ignorant of his devices)
7. Jesus Can Truly Sympathize with Us – **Hebrews 2:18; 4:15-16**
8. There is Always More at Stake than What We Might Think
   1. Sin will take you further than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay.
   2. One of Satan’s tactics – To get us to underestimate, or completely ignore the deeper insidious implications behind his temptations, and the greater lasting effects which succumbing to them will have.
   3. This is something Jesus saw right through – “He does more than not succumb: He conquers.” (Edersheim, Alfred, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, 211)
9. The Temptations of Jesus
10. Context
    1. Right after His baptism, and God’s words of acknowledgment and approval – **Matthew 3:13-17** – as an act of submission to God’s will.
       1. **Matthew 4:3, 6** – first and second challenge/taunt His relation to God.
       2. **Matthew 4:9** – last, tries to get Him to abandon it altogether.
       3. Truly, all temptation is an effort of Satan to cause doubt, fear, rebellion, negligence, indifference, and selfishness in our relation to God.
       4. As this is the case, each failure to endure temptation chips away at that relationship – not that forgiveness is not offered, but these decisions to sin come with lasting consequences.
    2. **Matthew 4:1** – It was the Father’s will that His ministry be preceded by His victory over Satan in overcoming temptation.
       1. **Mark 1:12** – ***“the Spirit drove Him”*** (*ekballō* – used or casting out demons)
    3. **Matthew 4:2** – hadn’t eaten for 40 days at this point.
       1. Fasting – a result of intense focus in prayer and meditation.
       2. NOTE: Satan will tempt you at your strongest moments, not just your weakest. (**cf. 1 Corinthians 10:12**)
11. The First Temptation – **Matthew 4:3-4**
    1. NOTE: Had been tempted during the 40 days, and this marks the beginning of the last of temptations during this stint (**cf. Mark 1:13**).
       1. **Matthew 4:2** – His fasting being taken advantage of.
    2. The temptation is deeper than the simple idea of yielding to Satan’s suggestions.
       1. It would be wrong to turn them to bread for the mere fact that Satan said to do so.
    3. Purpose:
       1. ***“If you are the Son of God”*** – taunt – Satan knows – **cf. Matthew 8:28-29; Acts 19:15**
       2. Combining a need with the reality of Jesus’ ability to miraculously supply it.
          1. Would feed 5,000 – **cf. Matthew 14:13-21**
          2. Then 4,000 – cf. **Matthew 15:32-39**
          3. Difference between these and current situation – to serve others and serve the mission of the gospel (miracles + teaching).
       3. Did not come to be served – **Mark 10:45**
       4. Miracles – **John 2:4, 11** – these had a purpose, which was not self-serving, nor without witnesses.
          1. **Cf. Mark 1:12-13** – wilderness, wild beasts, isolation – no witnesses.
       5. **Application – Satan wants us to forget our purpose, and seek to validate our venturing away from it.**
    4. Submission:
       1. Hunger – a valid need, and fulfilling it seems reasonable.
       2. To do this would be to fulfill a legitimate need in an illegitimate (sinful) way – **cf. 1 Corinthians 6:12-13** – sexual immorality is not same as satiating hunger, but even the latter must be fulfilled in its proper place.
       3. EVERY TEMPTATION REVOLVES AROUND THE SAME QUESTION – AM I IN ABSOLUTE SUBMISSION TO THE WILL OF GOD?
       4. “His circumstances were God-appointed; and where He so appoints them, He will support us in them, even as, in the failure of bread, He supported Israel by the manna” (Edersheim, Alfred, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, 210).
          1. **Matthew 4:4; Deuteronomy 8:1-3** – a test of their faithful obedience.
          2. ***“allowed you to hunger”*** – their thought – **Exodus 16:3; Acts 7:39** – in hearts turned back to Egypt.
          3. God – **Deuteronomy 8:3** – taught them that man lives by what proceeds from the mouth of God – “that is, by every means which God may appoint.” (McGarvey, J.W., 41)
       5. **Application – Satan wants us to only see that something is not inherently sinful, and miss the true sinful principles of lacking submission behind the action.**
          1. **He wants us to fail to see the true heart of submission to God.**
    5. Trust:
       1. ***“If you are the Son of God”*** – Why are you hungry? Won’t He take care of you? He must not be, you have to do it yourself.
       2. Doesn’t God care for you? Doesn’t He want you to be happy?
       3. **God desires our well-being, but we must trust that a command or restriction which might seem to jeopardize our well-being is indeed for our well-being.**
       4. **Matthew 4:4** – living by the word of God – spiritual – better life upon the word of God, God is sufficient.
          1. **Cf. Daniel 3:17-18** – God can deliver, but if not…
       5. **Application – Satan wants us to believe we know better than God about what is best for us, and that we can handle it on our own.**
    6. Jesus’ reply – **Deuteronomy 8:1-6, 10, 17, 18** – Obedience, God provides – dependability, trust in His ways, not by own power but by His word.
12. The Second Temptation – **Matthew 4:5-7**
    1. Pride in Trust – 1st questioned His trust, and upon a reply which showed His trust and devotion, the 2nd sought to exploit His trust, elicit pride, and encourage presumptuous behavior.
       1. Presuming on God – “If it be not despair of God, let it be presumption!” (Edersheim, Alfred, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, 211)
          1. Satan’s Quote – **Psalm 91:11-12**
          2. NOTE: Jesus quotes scripture to fight temptation, and manifest trust, so Satan cunningly seeks to exploit such through quoting scripture yet applying it in error.
       2. **1 Corinthians 10:12** – understanding the vulnerability of our own strengths.
       3. **2 Corinthians 12:9-10** – true strength/FAITH – not creating own problems as a test, but relying fully on God during tests.
    2. Context of **Psalm 91:**
       1. Leaves out ***“To keep you in all your ways” (v. 11***). (***cf. Luke 4:10 – “to keep you”)***
       2. What ways? – Is this all-encompassing, or are there specific limits in the context?
       3. Protection for those abiding in God’s presence:
          1. **(vv. 1-2)** – Abiding in God’s presence, trusting in Him (faith).
          2. **(vv. 3-8)** – protection described.
          3. **(vv. 9-13)** – reason – You have made the Lord your refuge/dwelling place – ***“all your ways”*** are describing these specific ways of faithfulness.
          4. **(vv. 14-16)** – because he has loved God.
    3. A verse without a context is a pretext – **cf. 2 Peter 3:16** – scripture can be twisted to our destruction.
       1. Satan wants us to remember God’s promises, and precepts, yet without proper context.
       2. He wants us to feel safe in our choices to sin, and so uses God’s word against us in this way.
    4. Jesus’ reply – **Deuteronomy 6:16**
       1. “Scripture itself explained and guarded the Divine promise by a preceding Divine command.” (Edersheim, Alfred, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, 211)
          1. As with the very Psalm quoted.
          2. The two verses quoted by Satan are indeed true, but his suggestion by them is precluded by what Jesus quotes.
       2. **(v. 3)** – careful observation of law that it may be well with them in the land.
       3. **(vv. 10-15)** – when prospering in the land, remember it is a blessing from God – full dependence, full fidelity.
       4. **(vv. 16-19)** – do not tempt (test) Him, but diligently obey that it may be well with you (as He protects and provides for His faithful).
          1. As in Massah – **Exodus 17:7** – water from rock.
          2. **After all God had done and provided, they had the audacity to test Him to provide yet again, rather than trusting through patient obedience.**
    5. **Application – Satan wants us to extend God’s word and His goodness beyond its self-defined limits, and act presumptuously under a façade of walking by faith.**
       1. Playing with temptation because you know God offers a way of escape.
       2. Deciding to sin because you know God is merciful.
       3. Lax approach to doctrine/practice because you know God offers grace.
       4. Acting without positive authority supposing God’s love is greater than what may be a mistake.
13. The Third Temptation – **Matthew 4:8-11**
    1. Jesus came into the world – **John 8:23** – outside of time and space, into time and space – subject to experience the enticing nature of the world (**cf. 1 John 2:16; Romans 8:3**).
    2. Came into the world to establish a kingdom not of this world, but that of eternal spiritual truth – **John 18:36-37**
    3. Purpose, priority, and position are again at stake in the greatest test yet – “To us in the circumstances the temptation, which at first sight seems, so to speak, the clumsiest, would have been well nigh irresistible. In measure as our intellect was enlarged, our heart attuned to this world-melody, we would have gazed with bewitched wonderment on that sight, surrendered ourselves to the harmony of those sounds, and quenched the thirst of our soul with maddening draught (draft).” (Edersheim, Alfred, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, 212)
       1. Jesus’ brothers – **John 7:2-5** – said He ought to show Himself to the world. Didn’t believe, but thought the Messiah was to be a world ruler.
       2. Jesus – **Luke 2:49** (must be about Father’s business); **Matthew 4:17** (preaching kingdom of heaven)
       3. He was just passing through this world, and had greater joy before Him (**cf. Hebrews 12:2),** and had true, heavenly, eternal glory to be restored in the end (**cf. John 17:5**).
    4. Jesus’ reply – **Deuteronomy 6:13**
       1. Context – **Deuteronomy 6:10-15** – before immense blessings of the promised land, remember who gave it, and give to Him your all in reverent service.
          1. Type of the superior spiritual blessings to come – blessings of the kingdom of heaven.
          2. Such blessings only God could give, but Satan was not given these to offer.
       2. Satan – **Luke 4:6-7** – claims authority to give it, certainly allowed some measure by God. (**cf. Job 1:12; 2:6)**
          1. Such an offer would be extremely enticing, yet, given thought, would be self-defeating.
          2. (1) Would not the One who allowed Satan such control be able to offer something greater? (2) Would not the fact of allowing Satan control exhibit the lacking value of the object(s) put in his control? (**cf. 1 John 2:17**) (3) Would not these truths lend to the demand to withhold such reverent worship from him and give it to the One truly deserving?
          3. There is no room for Satan! Only God!
    5. **Truly enticing to think – “This is the way to the crown without having to endure the cross.”** – but these two are truly inseparable, so the end would not have been the fulfillment Satan promised – **Philippians 2:8-11**
    6. **Application – Satan wants us to believe that what he has to offer is the greatest there is, so that we will turn our worship to him rather than God.**
       1. God of this world has blinded hearts – **2 Corinthians 4:3-4; 2 Timothy 2:26**
       2. We must see past the smoke and mirrors.
14. Aftermath – **Matthew 4:11, 17; James 4:7** – the Devil fled, and Jesus worked to bring God glory.
15. Applications
16. Beware of your vulnerabilities.
17. Beware of your strengths – Satan can exploit them, and make you fall by what you thought would make you stand.
18. Be watchful at all points of your life – highs, lows, in between.
19. Know God’s word – not just in memory, but in true faithful application. **(cf. Psalm 119:11)**
20. Always realize the enticement is always truly empty, and the very longing for fulfillment Satan seeks to exploit will be satisfied in resisting him and submitting to God.
21. Have faith that temptation can always be resisted by God’s grace and look to Jesus for help (and as proof).

**Conclusion**

1. God has been gracious enough to plan and preserve for us the record of Christ’s life, including the grueling temptations He was faced with throughout it.
2. By the example of Christ, and the exposure of Satan’s devices, we are ***“able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand” (Ephesians 6:13)***.