

Series: Overcoming Temptation

C.R. 6-10-18

“Temptation 1: Can We Trust God’s Provision?”

Text: Matthew 4: 1-4

Intro: We will start a 3-part series today on the temptation of Christ and what that means for us. I am certain today that everyone in this building deals with temptation. It comes at us in various forms, and in different degrees. Whether it is cheat, lie, steal, lust, look the other way, etc. we all face it. We are tempted to quit and to give up. Maybe you are tempted with pride and think that you are better than other people, or its sinful anger that plagues you. The question is “Can we win the battle?” Well one verse of scripture clears that up for us.

1Co 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

How can we believe such a verse? Because we believe that God is faithful. Our Lord walked through temptation as a man, facing down the enemy as a man, and won the battle. You and I will never be tempted with anything that He Himself has not faced. He knows how we feel. As **Hebrews 4:15** points out “he was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin”.

Jesus as a real human being who knew the weight of sin and the heaviness of temptation. He was not play fighting the devil here. He was as a man vulnerable. He could have fallen. He fought a real fight, as a man like us and won. He shows us what to expect and how to overcome temptation.

1) The Setting

- a. Should be noted what happened just before Jesus was led into the wilderness. His baptism and the approval of the Father as he said This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.
- b. His temptation was right after a very high moment in his earthly journey.
- c. He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. A dreadful place. A place of loneliness and isolation.
- d. He would fast for forty days and nights in this dreadful place.
- e. The gospel of Mark tells us that that during this period of isolation he was with the wild beasts, and Mark and Luke tell us that this whole time was a time of temptation.
- f. Matthew tells us that he was hungry.
- g. This is when the enemy walks in. At his weakest point when his whole flesh cries out for a bite of food.
- h. *MacArthur*: “We are not told what form the devil may have taken on this occasion, but his confrontation with Jesus was direct and personal. They spoke to each other and even moved about together. “

2) The Strategy.

- a. Note: The devil's strategy has always been the same. Here it is the same as in the garden with Eve. To cast doubt on God's word.
- b. **Gen 3:1** Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?
- c. If thou be the son of God.... He knew this to be true. It had just been announced at the baptism.
- d. He wants to plant a seed of doubt. Since you are the Son of God, should you really be this hungry? Does he not care? Manna for the rebellious, and nothing for you. Wow.
- e. So go ahead Jesus take matters into your own hands here. Feed yourself.
- f. **Phillips:** Satan was suggesting that Jesus use the *resources* of His sonship to violate the *responsibility* of His sonship.
- g. The first direct temptation in the wilderness was for Jesus to act against God's plan. To Disobey God.
- h. The purpose was not simply for Jesus to eat, but He was being tempted to doubt His Fathers' Word.
- i. The Strategy is the same. Doubt God's word. Doubt it's truth, its infallibility, its inspiration, its inerrancy.
- j. Above all here Satan was tempting Jesus to rebel against the Father. Do his own thing. His own will. You deserve it. Go ahead.
- k. Jesus states over and over that He came to do only the Father's will.
- l. **John 4:34** Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.
- m. **John 6:38** For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.
- n. In the Garden he would say "Not my will, but thine be done.
- o. Satan's strategy with this temptation was to shatter the trust and submission of Jesus.
- p. He wants to do the same to us.

3) The Scripture

- a. As we know and will see Jesus threw his punch back with the Word.
- b. **Deu 8:3** And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.
- c. **Psalms 119:11** "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee."
- d. Jesus is saying here that we are better off to obey and depend on God, waiting on His provision, than to grab satisfaction for ourselves as we think we need it.
- e. **MacArthur:** "God's people are never justified in complaining and worrying about their needs. If we live by faith in Him and in obedience to His Word, we will never lack anything we really need. (Phil 4:19).
- f. Jesus would not be shaken in His trust in the goodness of His Father or take any other route than that found in the Word of God.

- g. We are taught in Matthew 6:33 to Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you.
- h. *We are always better off to obey God, and to trust in his provision, than to become impatient and selfish and try to provide for ourselves in ways that disobey, or in any way compromise His Word.
- i. The temptation here was to satisfy the normal, physical appetite in abnormal ways and to rush ahead of God.
- j. The devil wants us to desire things in the wrong time and the wrong way.
- k. He wants us to believe that we can't trust God for what we need, and we must take matters into our own hands.
- l. **Vines:** God has promised that He will meet your needs, but He will do it in legitimate, Christ honoring ways.
- m. **The Point:** We always suffer when we willfully bypass God's word. No matter how urgent and important a need seems to be, we are to wait for our Father's provision.