

Series: Overcoming Temptation

C.R. 6-24-18

“The Test of God’s Program”

Text: Matthew 4:8-11

Intro: This is the third and final message in our 3-part series on Overcoming Temptation. We have watched as our Lord was tempted in the area of his Father’s provision. Then we watched as He was tempted in the area of God’s protection. Today we will watch as He is tempted in the area of God’s program. Satan is persistent, and he will try one more thing to try and destroy the plan of God. Let’s take a look at this third temptation of our Lord, and He overcame temptation.

1) The Setting (v.8)

- a. Again. That says a lot doesn’t it. Again, and Again. He works tirelessly at his craft.
- b. This high mountain is unknown, but the enemy wanted a place that he might paint his picture and make it even more enticing.
- c. The view from the top of this mountain extended far beyond what the physical vision could perceive.
- d. Luke tells us that in a moment in time Luke 4:5 he showed him all the kingdoms in all their glory.
- e. I thought about in my study how many Kingdoms in this world are led by and controlled by Satan himself.
- f. With the picture in full view Satan sets his trap.

2) The Strategy (v.9)

- a. The liar that Satan is acts as if he is in charge and tells our Lord with one bow of the knee to me, it can all be yours.
- b. Therefore, that power that Satan hath is not given, but permitted; not absolute, but limited. It is a lie that Satan can give these things at pleasure; see these scriptures: Psalm 24:1 ‘The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein;’ iDan. 2. 21, ‘He changeth the times and the seasons; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings;’ and ver. 37, ‘The God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.’ All the alterations that are in the earth are of the Lord; he pulleth down, and raiseth up, as seemeth good unto him. Therefore, this power of disposing kingdoms belongeth unto God.
- c. Satan knew who had the power, that is his point. To take the power away.
- d. “Why should you have to wait for what is already rightfully yours?”. “Why do you submit as servant, when you could reign as a king?”
- e. Satan was offering to Jesus what was already His, he was just saying why wait for it?
- f. The Father sent the Son to reclaim the title deed the Adam had lost by giving in to temptation, and the only way to gain that title deed was through righteous obedience to the plan and program of the Father.
- g. **Satan:** “Come on Jesus, Take what is rightfully yours now. We can do this without a cross you know. It can happen now. Not years and years down the road. Instead of enduring the long, bitter, painful road to the cross, and then waiting in heaven for God’s time to be complete you can rule the world now.
- h. Satan attacks us the exact same way. You can have it now. We just need to cut a corner here and there.

- i. You are going to need to stay away from the family some, work a little longer, miss some church, miss some devotions but it will be worth it in the end.
- j. **Satan:** I'll give you prosperity a lot sooner and for a lot less."
- k. Satan is a liar. He will offer you something cheap, but it will cost you more in the long run.
- l. What he gives is always immeasurably less than he promises.
- m. **Illustration:** This is what the Scripture says of worldly pleasure, (1 Tim. 5:6,) "She that lives in pleasure, is dead while she lives." One of our most faithful female missionaries, Mrs. Judson, was first awakened when a vain and worldly girl, by reading this sentence. Afterwards she went to the East, and suffered great persecution for the truth's sake, and now she is with God, drinking rivers of pleasure at his right hand. And what does the Scripture say against the love of profit, or of money? 1 Tim. 6:10. "Which, (that is, money,) while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."
- n. If Jesus had given in to this temptation those at the foot of the cross would have had to say "He saved Himself: others He cannot save."

3) The Scripture (v. 10)

- a. This temptation was so insane that Jesus dismissed Him. Satan's present power is only by God's permission.
- b. Jesus will inherit the kingdom in God's time, and we will inherit it with Him.
- c. There was no way that Jesus would sacrifice the greatness of what is to come, for some immediate pleasure and power.
- d. God wants to us to be happy and blessed. If we being evil know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more does our Father in heaven give what is good to us.
- e. We should desire happiness the way God gives it.
- f. **MacArthur:** Why should we settle for the cheap substitute Satan proffers? We can have the success of living righteously and pleasing our heavenly Father; why should we settle for the brief and disappointing successes sin produces? By God's grace we can have the peace that passes understanding; why should we settle for the cheap satisfactions that everyone understands but that will soon pass?

4) The Triumph (v.11)

- a. The devil left Him, and angels ministered to Him.
- b. What a comfort this must have been to Jesus. Not sure what the angels did but it was what he needed.
- c. *Satan tempts us the same ways. 1) To distrust God's providential care and solve our own problems. Meet our needs by our own plans and in our own power. 2) Presume on God's care and forgiveness by willingly putting ourselves in danger whether physical, economic, moral, spiritual etc.... 3) He will try to talk us into skipping God's program and doing our own. No need to wait.
- d. *All 3 ways found in 1 John 2:16 1) Lust of the flesh-the craving of the body. 2) Lust of the eyes-the craving of possessions. 3) Pride of Life-how you appear before others.
- e. We can win in every area but only the way Jesus did. With our eyes on the Father, and our heart full of the Word.