

The Science of Temptation Part 3
“How Jesus Overcame Temptation”
Bible Sermon Study Notes by Cary Rodgers, pastor

What is temptation?

Temptation: Solicitation or enticement to sin by breaking God's commandments and rejecting His testimony of Truth.

What is the “science of temptation”?

A **skillful implementation of intellectual and practical** methods based on a systematic study of the behavior of human beings to entice them to sin against God.

Adam and Eve yielded to Satan's temptation to disobey God because they doubted God. Eve was deceived and doubted. Adam willfully doubted God because he loved Eve more than God!

Introduction

NEVER FORGET THIS: DOUBT in God's explicit Word of TRUTH is a gateway to full blown rebellion against God!!!

Hebrews 3:12

12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an **evil heart of unbelief**, in departing from the living God.

Doubt is the direct opposite of faith. We must live by FAITH! Faith in God's explicit truth revealed in God's WORD.

Romans 1:16, 17

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that **believeth**; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, **The just shall live by faith.**

Hebrews 11:6

6 But without **faith** *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must **believe** that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

What is the failure of one man, but the victory another in which we all can be partakers of eternal life?

Romans 5:12, 18, 19

12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

18 Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the **obedience of one shall many be made righteous.**

1 Corinthians 15:22

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

What does Jesus say about overcoming temptation and sin?

John 16:33

33 *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; **I have overcome the world.***

Revelation 3:21

21 *To him that **overcometh** will I grant [give] to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

If you are able to overcome Satan's temptations you will overcome sin.

Jesus is our example on how to successfully overcome Satan's temptations.

1 Peter 2:21

21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, **leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:**

22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

Hebrew 4:15

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the **feeling of our infirmities**; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin.

Jesus gave us a perfect example on how to overcome Satan's temptations to yield to sin! Where Adam, Eve and all humanity fell Jesus overcame so we can be OVERCOMERS through Jesus!

Remember, Jesus was tempted in ALL points like we are, yet He did not yield to any of Satan's temptations. Jesus lived a sinless life even though Satan and his demons tempted Him to sin.

Before Jesus began his public ministry after his baptism, where was He led to prepare for the greatest mission for all humanity?

Matthew 4:1

1 Then was Jesus **led up of the Spirit** into the **wilderness to be tempted of the devil.**

Wilderness (Greek) erēmos [*er'-ay-mos*] **Thayer Definition:** 1) solitary, lonely, **desolate, uninhabited**

Tempted (Greek) peirazō [*pi-rad'-zo*]

From G3984; **to test** (objectively), that is, *endeavor, scrutinize, entice, discipline*: - assay, examine, go about, prove, tempt (-er), try.

How does Jesus prepare for the test in the wilderness?

Matthew 4:2

2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.

Jesus was totally in communion with God, preparing not only for Satan's test but also for the great mission to save the world from sin.

Forty in the Bible appear to represent a time of repentance, preparation, and communion with God.

Remember the 40's appear to be a number that points to preparation time

1. Jonah preached to the people of Nineveh for 40 days, preparation time to make a choice.
2. Moses prepared for his mission 40 years in the wilderness.
3. Moses was in the mountain with God 40 days and nights receiving instructions from God and preparing for its implementation.
4. Elijah had a 40 day journey to the mount to meet with God preparing for the next phase of his ministry and later translation.
5. When Jesus was resurrected, he was seen of men 40 days on this earth teaching and preparing his disciples for the mission to share the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ.

All God's people who are looking for a heavenly Canaan must be in the "wilderness" led by the Holy Spirit. We are living in preparation time (wilderness) now to prepare for an even greater work and the greatest test of persecution during the loud cry. This is what you are to prepare for NOW!!!! NOW is the wilderness experience.

What are the practical strategies on how to recognize and overcome temptation while in the wilderness and during the greatest test? Let us closely look at the example of Jesus.

Matthew 4:3

3 And when the tempter came to him (Jesus), he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

Remember, Satan's first strategy is to come to you as a friend, an angel of light. He did it to Eve and also used that same technique on Christ. He came to Christ in the wilderness as if he was an answer to prayer to help minister to the needs of Jesus.

"There came to the Saviour, as if in answer to His prayers, one in the guise of an angel from heaven. He claimed to have a commission from God to declare that Christ's fast was at an end. As God had sent an angel to stay the hand of Abraham from offering Isaac, so, satisfied with Christ's willingness to enter the bloodstained path, the Father had sent an angel to deliver Him; this was the message brought to Jesus. The Saviour was faint from hunger, He was craving for food, when Satan came suddenly upon Him. Pointing to the stones which strewed the desert, and which had the appearance of loaves, the tempter said, "If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." Desire of Ages, p. 119

Remember, Jesus had fasted 40 days and nights.

Lesson 1: Satan will not only come as an angel of light, but he always comes to tempt you in the time of your greatest need and trial.

Jesus was at His greatest need physically. Remember, Jesus was divine and human combined; fully God but also fully man. He felt the same hunger pains we feel. Imagine how you would feel after 40

days of not eating! Hunger pain is a natural alarm system that you must eat.

Satan thought he could get Jesus to doubt and yield to sin as he did Eve on the point of appetite. Appetite can never be underrated.

Have you ever gone to the store hungry? You are more inclined to buy more than usual and are tempted to eat things that are not healthy. Appetite is a powerful natural human reaction especially when you are hungry.

Eve had all the food she wanted and still yielded to Satan's temptations. Jesus was truly hungry and weak physically.

Lesson 2: Remember doubt is the gateway to deception and sin. Doubt in the explicit will of God cancels out faith and removes all discernment of Satan's lies.

Satan's incredulous command, "If you be the son of God, turn these stones into bread" was designed to place doubt in the mind of Jesus about His mission, but it also exposed who the "angel of light" truly was.

Lesson 3: God's true messengers will NEVER contradict the Word of God!

What was Jesus' response to Satan?

Matthew 4:4

4 But he answered and said, **It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.**

Notice here that Jesus did not debate with Satan. Satan's incredulous statement to tempt Jesus to doubt was exposed. Jesus' response was the scriptures.

Lesson 4: When tempted never debate nor dialogue with the tempter. This was Eve's mistake.

Lesson 5: Only use the Word of God as explicitly written as a weapon to eliminate doubt. When Jesus quoted the scriptures to Satan, it wasn't for Satan but for Himself to combat doubt as an example for us. Either verbally or silently, the Word of God gave Jesus focus on the mission and not His hunger.

What do you think went through Jesus' mind as Satan was saying, "If you be the son of God"? Jesus knew who He was and His mission as revealed through the prophecies of the scriptures. Remember, it was just over 40 days before that the voice of God the Father came from heaven saying, "This is my beloved son whom I am well pleased." **Jesus did not dialogue with Satan to prove that He is the Son of God. Jesus was not trying to convince Satan.**

Lesson 6: Satan in his temptations, especially during the time of persecution and trial, will question your sincerity and Christianity. "If you be a Christian prove it to me." "You ain't a real Christian, show it to me." You have NOTHING to prove! This is Satan's trap of control. Never try to "prove" your Christianity, especially when someone is tempting you to yield to sin! Or tempting you to approve of their sinful ways.

Even at the cross Jesus did not try to "prove" who He was to the tempter and those who

rejected His truth.

For example: What was Jesus response to His tempters while on the cross?

Matthew 27:39 - 46

- 39 And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,
 40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself. **If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.**
 41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said,
 42 He saved others; himself **he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down** from the cross, and we will believe him.
 43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, **if he will have him:** for he said, I am the Son of God.

Luke 23:36, 37, 39

- 36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,
 37 And saying, **If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.**
 39 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, **If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.**

This is our example. Jesus did not response to their foolishness. He stayed focused on the mission. Again, don't respond to the tempters. I am sure that Jesus quoted scriptures in His mind during this time. You MUST do the same...

Going back to Matthew 4:4 it is obvious that Jesus' main source of spiritual strength while he was fasting 40 days and nights in the wilderness was the WORD.

When Jesus responded with "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," He was quoting directly from Deuteronomy 8:3.

Why is this important for us to understand prophetically in relation to the Messiah? Let's look at what Moses message to the children of Israel was after the 40 years in the wilderness was ending on the border of Canaan.

Deuteronomy

- 1 All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers.
- 2 And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.
- 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.

The forty years of the children of Israel test [THE 40 YEARS WAS NOT THEIR TEST IT WAS THEIR PUNISHMENT, THE WERE TESTED TEN TIMES BEFORE AND FAILED THEN THEY WERE GIVEN A 40 YEAR PUNISHMENT] in the wilderness pointed to the 40 days that Jesus suffered hunger and temptation in the wilderness. They were to trust the Word and focus on the mission, not their temporary needs.

Don't miss it Jesus while in the wilderness during his preparation for trial ate spiritually the Word of God, the bread of life. Jesus, the Bread of Life ate for Himself the Bread of Life. Jesus humbled

Himself and became a man, suffered hunger but was not controlled by it. Jesus was never controlled by His temporary needs. He was focused on the mission. This is our perfect example.

What does Jesus says about this in Matthew 6:33-34?

Matthew 6:33, 34

33 **But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.** [temporary physical needs; food, clothing, and shelter]

34 **Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.**

Lesson 7: Focus on the mission in the midst of trial and temptation and not your temporal physical needs. If you focus on your temporal needs you will yield to temptation. If Jesus focused on his hunger, He would have yielded to temptation.

Lesson 8: Jesus is our perfect example. He never used His divine power to fulfill His own physical needs. He was teaching us that we too can have full faith in God and His Word.

Did Satan leave Jesus Christ alone after Jesus had victory over the first temptation? What did Satan do next?

Matthew 4:5 - 6

5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

6 And saith unto him, **If thou be the Son of God**, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Satan again tried to get Jesus to doubt! But this time he used the scriptures himself to try to tempt Jesus to yield to temptation.

Satan was quoting from **Psalm 91:11-12**, but misapplied it and omitted a key part.

Psalm 91:11, 12

11 For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

12 They shall bear thee up in *their* hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Satan misapplied the scripture: Psalm 91 is a promise for the faithful in the last days going through the great tribulation. Satan tried to have Jesus not only doubt who He was but to act out of presumption and not faith. Remember presumption is doing things contrary to the explicit will of God, expecting blessings from God.

Satan omitted: "to keep thee in all thy ways." God's angels will minister and protect us during the time of great tribulation to keep us faithful and doing the will of God.

Lesson 9: Satan doesn't give up! He will come again, but with a different twist.

Lesson 10: You better study and know the Word for yourself. Satan will use it and twist its truth in order to tempt you to yield to sin.

How did Jesus respond?

Matthew 4:7

7 Jesus said unto him, **It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God**

Again, Jesus did not debate. He used His weapon, the Word, again. This time He clearly reveals to Satan that He knows who He is, "the Lord thy God." In other words, "Don't test me, I am Lord, (supreme authority) your God. The One that created you." Jesus revealed here His rank and authority over Satan. He also revealed that Satan had NO power over Him... "the Lord thy God."

Lesson 11: Satan has no power over you when you put your trust in the "Lord thy God" in the midst of temptation and trial. Satan's power MUST submit to the "Lord thy God."

You can imagine that Satan was extremely angry! Jesus, though hungry and weak, is spiritually full and strong.

Out of anger and desperation to get Jesus to yield what did Satan do next?**Matthew 4:8, 9**

8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an **exceeding high mountain**, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, **if thou wilt fall down and worship me.**

In other words, Satan is telling Christ that he will give what he has stolen from Adam, dominion over the world, if Jesus would fall down and worship Satan. Here Satan gets to the point, worship is what he wants. It ALL about worship! Satan wants worship. Remember he wants the position and honor of the divine Christ. He wants to be worshipped like Christ. So in this temptation he taught that if he can get Christ to worship him, Christ would in essence deny His mission. Satan was implying, "**Christ you don't have to go through the humility, shame, and pain. I will just give it to you. If you worship me.**"

Also, even though Satan took dominion of the earth from Adam, who still owned the earth? Jesus, He is still the Creator. In essence, Satan was offering Jesus what He already had.

Worship is Satan's main goal. He knows if he can get you to doubt and deny truth, he has your worship by default!

Lesson 12: Satan will try to allure you to yield to temptation by offering you money, wealth, position, or power OR threaten to take away your money, job, position, or life IF you don't worship him! But remember Satan is a liar, he does not have to follow through on his alluring offers!

In the last days the main issue will be about who you worship, Jesus or Satan. Truth or lies. The Word or human philosophy.

This issue of worship will be presented to ALL humanity, who do you believe where do you put your trust? Are you more worried about your temporal needs for food, clothing, and shelter more than following TRUTH and putting your full faith in God?

Who is going to worship Satan, the dragon, and the beast, Papal Rome, in the last days?**Revelation 13:4, 8**

4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him (the beast), **whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.**

Don't forget a great test is coming and those who have NOT prepared now in the wilderness will be overcome by the Satan and his beast in the last days. Are you ready for the test? Preparation time is now. Only those who have explicit trust in the Word of God and are completely obedient to Him and His Word through Christ will be written in the Book of Life!

What was Jesus response to Satan's offer?

Matthew 4:10

10 Then saith Jesus unto him, **Get thee hence (out!), Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.**

Again, Jesus did not get in debate with Satan, He used the scriptures again! Here, Jesus sums up the scriptures, worship God and God only (period). He calls Satan by name and tells him to leave!

Lesson 13: Don't play with Satan in the midst of temptation, claim Matthew 4:10 and ask God to tell Satan to get out! Also, remember the promise in James 4:7.

James 4:7

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. **Resist (stand against/oppose) the devil, and he will flee from you.**

When Christ told Satan to leave what did Satan do? Also, was Jesus temporal needs met after he passed the test?

Matthew 4:11

11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Again, Jesus' main focus was His mission and not His hunger. When He passed the test His physical needs were met.

Lesson 14: Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteous and ALL your physical needs will be met even in the midst of trial and temptation. Go through the test. Don't let appetite overcome the mission that God has for us.

Remember: You **MUST** go through the wilderness experience now in preparation for the great crisis, intense trial, and persecution that is soon to come.

Jesus' wilderness experience not only gave Him the spiritual power to resist the temptations of Satan in the wilderness, but the remainder of His ministry on this earth, because the trial and persecution got more intensified and reached its peak at the cross of Calvary.

What is the promise of escape of temptation to ALL the faithful?

1 Corinthians 10:12, 13

12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

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*.

The only way to overcome Satan's temptations is to have faith in the explicit revealed truth in God's Word.

Appeal