

First Sunday in Lent – 2023

Saturday, 2/25 at 4:00 & Sunday, 2/26 at 9:00



Lenten Wednesdays: Services 11 & 7; Meals 12 & 6

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: Every day we are being tempted in many and various ways. **Those temptations seek to pull us ✦into sin and ✦away from Jesus.** So, in this sermon, *let us learn from Jesus how to respond when we are tempted!*

Before we get into the details, what is the BIG picture?

- God created, then the first people were tempted and fell into sin, *so God promised to send the Christ.*
- In the fulness of time, *the Son of God put on human flesh and grew up under Joseph and Mary.*
- When Jesus was 30, *God the Father made Him the Christ by anointing Him with the Holy Spirit.*

Right after Jesus officially become the Christ, *the Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Why?* To ✦be our substitute, ✦defeat the devil, ✦destroy his work!

- Adam and Eve *were tempted and fell*.
- When the LORD freed the Israelites from their slavery in Egypt, *they were tempted and fell – because they did not trust the LORD to give them the Promised Land*. The result: *they wandered in the wilderness for nearly 40 years and repeatedly fell into sin*.
- Jesus is *the second Adam, the ultimate Israel!* He was tempted by the devil for 40 days. Even though all people sinned, *and earned death and hell*, **the Son of God in human flesh † was FULLY tempted but did NOT fall and † ULTIMATELY crushed our greatest enemy!**

Now, in **Matthew 4:1-11**, let us learn from Jesus:

### 1. **He Put Spiritual Things Before Physical Things:**

- a. Physical Food was Jesus' **Great Temporal Need**: <sup>1</sup> **Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.** <sup>2</sup> **And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.**  
 // Since the †powerful, †deceiving, †fork-tongued devil had brought spiritual death to every human being, **the very hungry Son of God engaged the enemy – like fighting with one hand tied behind His back.**
- b. Trust in God was Jesus' **Greater Eternal Need**: <sup>3</sup> **And the tempter came and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God [PROVE IT], command that these stones become bread.”** <sup>4</sup> **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.’”** [Deut. 8:3] // Try to †imagine Jesus' **extreme** hunger and †realize His ability to do what the devil said – **stones to bread!** Jesus' mouth may have been

watering, but He refused to abandon His trust in His Father by taking His own needs into His own hands! What about us? Let us **weigh SPIRITUAL things more heavily and always TRUST** in our heavenly Father!

## 2. He Believed God's Promises but He Did Not Test Them:

- a. Jesus Was Certain of God's Promises: **<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple [see the image on the cover], <sup>6</sup> and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God [PROVE IT], throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU'; and 'ON their HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'"** [Ps. 91:11-12] // How many promises has God made to people in the Bible? A man named Everett Storms counted 7,487 promises!<sup>1</sup> How do we know they are true? Must we test them? No! *We simply believe them!*
- b. Jesus Properly Quoted the Bible: **<sup>7</sup> Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"** [Deut. 6:16] // The devil seems to know **our weaknesses AND how to twist the Bible to tempt us. Therefore, it is vital for us to grow in being more like Jesus by rightly knowing the Bible and using it as our spiritual sword to do battle against the spiritual forces of wickedness (Eph. 6).**

## 3. He Was Not Diverted from the Father's Plan:

- a. Jesus Did Not Believe the Devil's Lie: **<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1769&context=leaven#>

the kingdoms of the world and their glory;<sup>9</sup> and he said to Him, “All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.” // Is America in trouble? Last year 60% of college students admitted to cheating<sup>2</sup> – taking a sinful path to pass a test. The devil proposed to Jesus an apparent way to bypass the agony of the cross, but Jesus STUCK with the Father’s plan and was NOT deceived by the devil. Let us do the same!

- b. Jesus Rightly Worshiped and Served:<sup>10</sup> **Then Jesus said to him, “Go, Satan! For it is written, ‘YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.’”** [Deut. 6:13; 10:20] // The devil is a very great angel, a very great EVIL angel, but NO ANGEL should be worshiped, not even a holy angel. As recorded in Revelation 22, John wrote: “I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. But he said to me, ‘Do not do that.... **Worship God**’” (8-9). Forgiven, saved – let us worship and serve only God!

**Conclusion:**<sup>11</sup> **Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.** // Kretzmann: “The enemy’s [defeat]... had been established.” On Good Friday, Jesus †crushed Satan’s head and †sealed His great victory!

**Let Us Pray:** Dear Jesus, You know we are tempted by the devil, the fallen world, and our sinful nature, so equip us with God’s truth, fill us with the HS, grant us a strong desire to glorify God, and move us to always take the way of escape!

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<sup>2</sup> <https://proctoredu.com/blog/tpost/5dk67zrns1-academic-dishonesty-statistics#:~:text=60.>