

'THE REST OF THE STORY'
(Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth about Temptation)
Applying the Life of Christ to Our Lives Today

'Tempting Jesus (and us)'

Some doubt if the devil's temptation (*Greek word 'pay-rawd-zoe' / put to a test*) of Jesus was truly an enticement to Him since Christ was '*God in flesh*'. How could God the Son be truly tested, they reason, if Jesus in fact didn't actually have any capacity to sin (**2 Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 7:26, etc.?**). To be sure Jesus was fully God and fully man in one divine Person during His first coming incarnation, but did perfect holiness negate Jesus' true humanity from feeling the pull of the world, the flesh, and the devil? It is clear in Scripture that His human nature (*not sin nature*) was tempted in every possible way (**Hebrews 4:15**). Like all people, He must have felt the downward gravitation upon His humanity to crave the '*lusts of the flesh, lust of the eyes and pride of life*' being hurled at Him by the devil in the wilderness (**Matthew 4:1-11, Luke 4:1-13 & 1 John 2:15-17**). The Lord's holiness countered the temptation of His human nature with spiritual resistance and Scripture, thus it is obvious the temptations were truly felt by Christ's humanity and resisted by His divine nature. In the way Jesus confronted these temptations Christ showed everyone in whom He now dwells by His Spirit, how to always *overcome* (**1 John 5:4-5, 18**) anything the secular world, our own sinful flesh, or *schemes* of the devil may hurl at us throughout our earthly days (**Ephesians 6:10-13**).

Since Christians do not have the advantages of a sinless human nature and being fully God in the flesh, supernatural provision is provided for each believer – *personal indwelling by the Holy Spirit* (**Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30-32, 5:18-20**) and personal application of the *holy Scriptures* (**Psalms 119:9-11, Ephesians 6:16-17, Hebrews 4:12, 1 Peter 2:1-3**). God's Spirit and His Word are every believer's '*secret weapon*' for avoiding temptation as much as possible and overcoming it whenever the Lord sovereignly allows it to test us (**1 Corinthians 10:13**). Another *equalizer* privilege offered to God's people under temptation, is '*the armor of God*' commanded in **Ephesians 6:14-18** which every wise disciple of Christ will put on when facing situations with high likelihood of people, places or things that will probably pose problems of temptation (**Romans 13:11-14**).

Temptation to sin is never from God (**James 1:13**). Most of the time we tempt ourselves (**James 1:14-15**) when we allow our minds to ponder sinning or we fix our gaze on the things of this world or lust after people in it. The Lord doesn't tempt, but He does allow it for the purpose of helping us know where we are weak so we can fortify these areas in us accordingly (**2 Corinthians 10:3-6**). Our Father also allows us to encounter temptation to defeat the enemy and acquire eternal reward for victorious Christian living (**James 1:12**). Refusing temptation also inspires other Christians aspiring to overcome temptation and develop faith for a better way of life in Christ (**Philippians 3:15-21**).

A great blessing of resisting temptation (**James 4:7-10**) is that after successfully overcoming it, God comforts, revives and blesses us for choosing to please Him instead of our flesh or others. In both **Matthew 4:11** and **Mark 1:12** the Bible says holy angels ministered to Jesus after the devil slinked off in defeat from Him. When we emerge victorious over temptation God's Holy Spirit and His holy angels also minister to us and we feel His pleasure for having resisted temptation (**Hebrews 1:14, 1 Peter 4:12-14**). Nobody should ever flirt with temptation, or purposely get into circumstances where it can happen, but when temptation does come, we can overcome it just like our Lord and Savior already has done in the wilderness.

PtL

‘...Lead Us Not Into Temptation’
(Overcoming Temptation By ‘The Jesus Model’)
Luke 4:1-13 / War in the Wilderness
(Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13)

The War in the Wilderness

(Jesus vs. Satan / Hebrews 4:15, 7:26, 13:8)

- Discuss how Jesus’ temptation may have felt different to Him than it feels to normal human beings. Since He was/is God, do you think temptation was easier or harder?
- How does Jesus’ wilderness temptation experience help you in overcoming it in your life?
- Talk about specifics of using Jesus’ anti-temptation technique and how you intend to follow His example whenever tempted from now on.

The War in the World

(The Christian vs. Satan / 1 John 2:15-17)

- How many pieces of the armor of God can you remember? After listing, see *Ephesians 6:13-18*.
- If you had to go to war against temptation with only your original list, what would have been your vulnerable areas?
 - Would you probably have won or lost considering the missing pieces?
- How do you ‘put on’ the ‘whole armor of God’?
 - What must be ‘put off’ for it to fit best?

The Ways of War

(The Word vs. Wickedness / James 1:12-15)

(Psalm 119:11-13, 1 Corinthians 10:13, 1 John 5:4, 18-19)

- The devil eventually retreats when he is confronted with appropriate Scripture.
 - What does the enemy and his demons know about the Word of God that repels them?
- Doesn’t this explain why the enemy is so ineffective against those who have memorized lots of Scripture and is so effective against believers weak in Scripture memory?
- It is also important to know and memorize God’s Word because Satan is expert in twisting verses (*taking it out of context, omitting parts of a verse or passage, etc.*).
- What verses of God’s Word are you now memorizing to help you resist temptation so when the enemy comes at you next time you will be ready?
 - If you’re not memorizing Scripture, why?
 - Do you think you are strong enough on your own to deal with the devil and temptation?
- **Pick some verse that will strengthen you in your most vulnerable area and memorize it this weekend, okay?**