

## **UNDERSTAND THE STRATEGY – PART 4**

### **“DEFEATING TEMPTATION”**

It is 6000 years old, but alive and well. It is as ferocious as a lion, and as deadly as poison. It is relentless in its pursuit and destroys those who it catches. It brings people pleasure one moment and sets them on fire from hell the next. It is available at every turn and you encounter it everyday, many times. It can touch you and remain powerless, but if you touch it, it can kill you. It is temptation.

It is something that all of us have faced, and something to which all of us have succumb. This enemy of our souls will pursue us until we die, but there is a way to overcome it. However, if we are to find victory, we cannot look to ourselves. We must look to the One who alone was able to defeat it, so that we might follow His example and draw from His enabling power – Jesus Christ.

The joy is that Jesus did overcome temptation and left us with a model to follow. As a man, Jesus could teach men how to use their human natures as God intended.

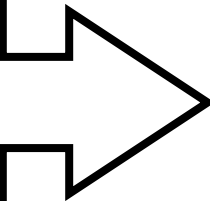
“He took our human nature and showed us how to live it.”  
- D. L. Moody

But this is comfort to us because as a man He also faced the same temptations that we faced, and emerged triumphant over them. Therefore He is able to help us when we are tempted. Note how the following verses teach this about Jesus:

➤ **Hebrews 2:18**

➤ **Hebrews 4:14-16**

Thought question: If Jesus was God (which He was and is) and could not sin (Jas. 1:13; Hab. 1:13), then how can He be said to have genuinely faced the temptations as we do?



Do we have any reason to say that we are facing any temptations that are too great for us to handle with Christ's strength? See also:

➤ 1 Cor. 10:13

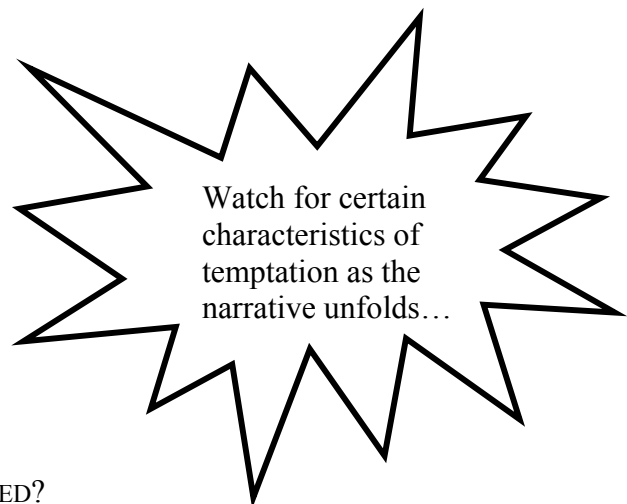
**Matthew 4** contains the account of the temptation of Christ and provides for us the model of overcoming and defeating temptation. In this chapter, Satan confronts the Son of God in a series of temptations with a full assault. He had a series of purposes, in attempting to cause Jesus to stumble and sin:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What is Matthew concerned to portray about Jesus in the Gospel he penned?

**We are going to answer 4 questions that are raised in the temptation of Christ, so that we might remember them when we are tempted and be faithful to overcome.**

1. WHY DOES GOD ALLOW ME TO BE TEMPTED?
2. HOW CAN I PREPARE FOR TEMPTATION?
3. WHAT DOES TEMPTATION LOOK LIKE?
4. HOW CAN I OVERCOME IT IN MY LIFE?



1. WHY DOES GOD ALLOW ME TO BE TEMPTED?

“Then” causes us to look to the previous context in Jesus’ ministry. What is that context?

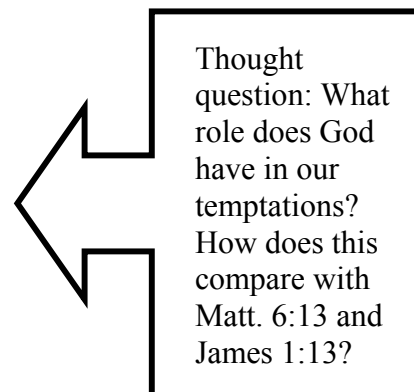


“Into the wilderness” – what does this describe about the setting in which Jesus was tempted? Add also Mark 1:13.



“Tempted by the devil” – who is this foe and what name characterizes him according to v. 3a?

The question that this section raises, ‘Why does God allow me to be tempted?’ is answered in v. 1 – who is responsible for Jesus being in the wilderness to undergo this temptation?



What are the purposes of temptation?

1. Satan's –
2. God's –

➤ **Gen. 2:8-9, 15-17; 3:1-7**

➤ **Gen. 50:20**

➤ **Deut.8:1-2**

➤ **Job 1-2**

➤ **Rom. 8:28**

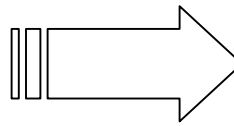
Sum it up! Why does God allow you to be tempted?

2. HOW CAN I PREPARE FOR TEMPTATION?

Jesus did something to prepare for temptation, what was it?

What is fasting?

How would a fast prepare Him for temptation?



Do you fast to prepare for temptation?

How long did Jesus fast to prepare for temptation? What would this have done to His physical strength?

What are some other ways that we can prepare for temptation?

Can you think of any examples of someone that did not prepare for temptation and fell because of it?

3. WHAT DOES TEMPTATION LOOK LIKE?

The Greek seems to indicate that Jesus was tempted in minor ways before the end of the 40 day fast, but the 3 tests that follow are the most severe, when Jesus is the most vulnerable.



There are 3 categories into which all temptations fall. Christ was tempted in the fullest possible capacity of all 3, and is able therefore to come to us who are tempted in these same temptations in lesser degrees. What are the categories?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

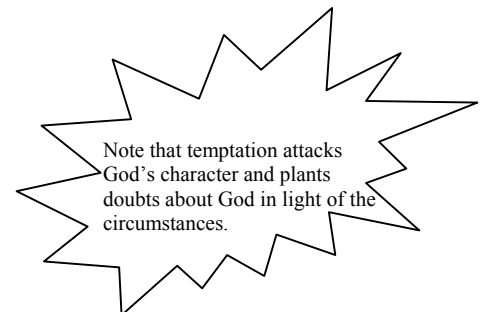
These will serve as the outline of the temptations Jesus faces in identifying temptation.

### #1. The Lust of the Flesh

What is the essence of this temptation?

How does this appeal to His flesh?

What was Satan tempting Jesus to think about God?



What does this temptation say about Satan's snares in the realm of the possible?

What was Jesus' response and how does that context fit with Jesus' circumstances?

### #2. The Boastful Pride of Life

What is the pinnacle of the temple? How high is this?

What is the essence of the temptation here?

How does the devil use God's Word?

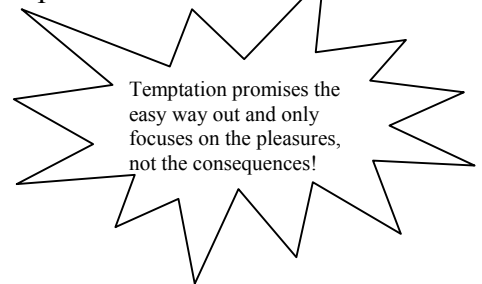


What would be the “benefits” of jumping off of the tower according to Satan?

How does Jesus respond to this temptation? Why is it wrong to put God to the test?

### #3. The Lust of the Eyes

What is the essence of the temptation, and why would this tempt Jesus if it would all be His in the end anyway?



What was the price of “all of this?”

What would be the result for sinners if Jesus had given into the temptations of the devil?

How is giving into temptation like Satan worship?

How did Jesus respond to the test in this case?

### 4. HOW CAN I OVERCOME IT IN MY LIFE?

Every time Jesus was tempted, how did He respond?

What portion of God's Word did He recall in the temptations and how did He have them available to draw from?

In retrospect, was anything that Satan promised true about God? What does this say about the nature of temptation?

Why the angels?

What does Luke 4:13 add that is most essential to remember about this temptation that is true of all temptations?

According to Romans 16:19-20, what is the promise that we can cling to while we remain here to be tempted?

### **TRUTH IN THE LIFE**

Take some time to evaluate yourself on the following questions:

1. How am I doing in my battle against temptation?
2. What temptations tend to ensnare me more than others, and what can I do to avoid them?
3. What particular Scriptures can I memorize, and what other things can I do to prepare for temptation?
4. Is there anything before God I need to confess as sin that I have been allowing to overcome me?