

## HOW TO DEAL WITH TEMPTATION MATTHEW 4:1-11

### Introduction

In our text, we find the account of the temptation of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, as He was out in the wilderness! Now, the wilderness might seem like a strange place to be tempted. But let me ask, have you ever been tempted in a time and place that you least expected it? It happens!

We know that temptation has been with us ever since Satan tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden in Genesis 3. We know the story of how Satan came to her subtly and got her focus off of God and His command and on to the fruit of the forbidden tree! She yielded to the temptation and, well, here we all are in a royal mess of sin!

Temptation is something we must all deal with on a daily basis:

1. It can greet us when we awake...
2. It can meet us as we begin our daily routine...
3. It can find us on our way to work or as we go out and about...
4. It can provoke us at our places of business or in the market place...
5. It can find us in our leisure activities...
6. It can even find us at Church...
7. It can meet us again as we return home again...
8. Sometimes it can even test us as we retire to sleep...

Temptation can seem almost omnipresent at times!

Somebody said it this way: *“Watch out for temptation! Because the more you see of it the better it looks.”* That’s true isn’t it!

Sometimes it seems as though Satan and his temptations try to wear us down by repeatedly coming our way, chipping away at our defenses, and just waiting for us to yield to temptation’s constant harassments!

I’m glad that we have Jesus to show us the way to resist temptation: *Hebrews 4:15-16—“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. 16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”*

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### THINGS TO OBSERVE HERE ABOUT TEMPTATION:

#### 1. **When We Are Tempted Of The Devil It Is Not Without The Knowledge Of God Or Without His Permission! (Vs 1)**

- A. The Spirit Led Jesus In A Particular Direction!
- B. The Spirit Led Jesus To A Particular Place!
- C. The Spirit Led Jesus For A Particular Purpose!

God may lead us to and through times of testing and temptation, but He never tempts us to do evil. **(James 1:13-14)**

*Example—The Testing Of Job. (Job 1:9-12; 2:3-7)*

#### 2. **Some Of Our Greatest Spiritual Peaks Are Followed By Times Of Greatest Testing And Temptation!**

- A. Jesus Had Just Been Baptized.
- B. Jesus Us Had Just Been Fasting.
- C. Jesus Was Just Beginning His Ministry.

*Example—The Testing Of Job. (He was a man that feared God and eschewed evil and “was the greatest of all the men of the east.”)*

#### **1 Corinthians 10:1-13**

#### 3. **Satan Attacks Come In Three Specific Areas:**

**These can be seen in both his temptation of Eve and of Jesus!**

*Genesis 3:6—“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”*

- A. **The Lust Of The Flesh. (Vs 3)**

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- B. The Lust Of The Eyes. (Vs 8)**
- C. The Pride Of Life. (Vs 6)**

**4. The Devil Most Often Will Begin Temptation In The Area Of The Flesh At Which We Are The Most Weak Or Vulnerable! (Vs 2-3)**

After 40 days of fasting, Jesus was hungry!

*1 Corinthians 7:5—“Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.”*

What is your weakness? Be careful and guard yourself in that area, because that is where Satan is most likely to attack you!

**5. The Devil Will Tempt You To Command Things And Demand Things That God Never Intended For You!**

**A. He Will Tempt You To Depend On Self And Its Resources Instead Of On God And His Resources! (Vs 3)**

*1 Corinthians 10:31—“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”*

**B. He Will Tempt You To Exercise Self Will In An Area Where There Should Be Dependence Upon God!**

*Proverbs 3:5-6—“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”*

**6. The Devil Will Tempt You To Exalt Self Through Pride And At The Same Time To Tempt God. (Vs 6-7)**

*Example – Snake handlers. (Mark 16:18)*

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Here is how the Devil works: He’ll remind you that 1 John 1:9 is in the Bible. He’ll say: “*Go head and do it—the Lord will forgive you!*”

*Psalm 19:13—“Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous [i.e. arrogant] sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.”*

**7. The Devil Will Twist And Misquote Scripture In An Attempt To Get You To Fall Into Temptation. (Vs 6-7)**

**A. He Leaves Out Important Parts. (Psalm 91:11)**

**B. He Takes Scripture Out Of Context. (Psalm 91:9-16)**

**8. The Devil Will Tempt You To Take Shortcuts To The Will Of God. (Vs 8-9)**

When you try to shortcut, you end up getting cut short.

**HOW ARE WE TO DEAL WITH TEMPTATION?**

**1. We Need To Be Awake And Aware To The Realization Of Temptation!**

*1 Peter 5:8-9—“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.”*

**2. We Need To Look To Jesus As Our Example! (1 Peter 2:19-23; Hebrews 12:1-2)**

We need to resist temptation the same way Jesus did. (Vs. 4, 7, 10-11)

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*Psalm 119:11—“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”*

*Psalm 119:105—“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”*

*Ephesians 6:17—“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:”*

*Hebrews 4:12—“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”*

*2 Timothy 2:15—“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*

*James 4:7—“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”*

**3. We Need To Look To God For Help In Our Temptation!**

*1 Corinthians 10:13—“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.”*

*Hebrews 2:17-18—“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.”*

*James 4:8—“Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.”*

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**Conclusion**

D.L. Moody once said this about temptation: *“When Christians find themselves exposed to temptation they should pray to God to uphold them, and when they are tempted they should not be discouraged. It is not a sin to be tempted; the sin is to fall into temptation.”*

Are you having a problem with temptation?

What steps are you using to resist temptation?

Unless we deal with temptation the way Jesus did, it will more than likely triumph over us rather us triumphing over it!