

The Power to Defeat the Temptations that Rule You

Let's Set the Stage

- Temptations are powerful tools Satan uses in our lives to rule us.
 - Every time you give in to temptation, you are letting it rule you.
 - It controls you and robs you of your freedom.
 - You think you are controlling it, but it is controlling you.
- In order to overcome temptations, you have to rule the temptations.
 - God has given us the tools to overcome any and every temptation.
 - The problem is, either, we enjoy the result of the temptation, so we keep giving in or we get tired of fighting it and give in.

Read Matthew 4:1-11

- The Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted or tested by Satan.
 - The wilderness is where God does His greatest work while Satan performs his greatest attacks.

-How would you define/describe temptations? Why are they so hard to fight?

- The basic idea of temptation is that God is lying to us, trying to deprive us of something good, so we take things into our own hands to get what we want.
- Temptation is not sin.

*-“Temptation is the thought plus the inclination to sin, possibly manifested by **lingering over the thought** or **seeking it out**. But sin itself is when we inwardly say yes to the temptation, when we would do the deed, even though we do not do it.” Dallas Willard*

- How you respond to temptation will determine how you live your life.
- Defeated & controlled or victorious & in control.

Satan came at Jesus in three separate attacks, tempting Jesus in three very different ways. When it comes to temptation, Jesus knows first-hand how to identify it, what to do while being tempted, and how to overcome temptation victoriously...

Let's Take it to the Next Level

1. The Temptation to Question God's love. (3-4)

- This was a temptation to doubt God's love, care, promises, and thus His character.

-How did this attack question God's love?

- If you are hungry, why isn't He feeding you?
- Why did God allow this in your life?
- How could God allow this to happen to you?
- You are just too bad, too messed up for God to love you.
- (Give the Gospel)

- Satan tempted Jesus to put his physical needs before his spiritual needs.
- Our physical needs are powerful.
 - Lust, addictions, pride, recognition, status, success.
- When we allow our **physical needs** to lead us instead of our **spiritual needs**, we can sin and will sin.
- Jesus could have easily turned the stones into food to satisfy his craving, but he didn't **act** on the temptation.

- Jesus countered the attack by quoting Deut. 8:3.

- He reminded Satan that the spiritual is more important than the physical. That feeding on God's Word is more important than eating physical food.

2. The Temptation to Question God's Word. (5-6)

- This was a temptation about misusing God's Word.
- Satan knows and can quote Scripture. He used Scripture to try and make Jesus sin. He did the same with Eve when he questioned exactly what God has said.
- This attack used Scripture but used it **out of context**. If God is who He says He is and loves you, then He will protect you if you jump. (Psalm 91:11-12.)
- Satan left out "to keep thee in all thy ways."
- Satan tried to say this verse means that God will protect everyone who defies the natural law of gravity and that of common sense. But it's really saying that God protects those in His will.
- Taking Scripture out of context is a major issue! You can make God's Word justify about anything if taken out of context.
- Entire false doctrines are built, false claims, false views of God, false promises.
- Jesus counters the temptation with another verse revealing that you cannot divorce Scripture from Scripture. Deut. 6:16- that we are not to tempt God.

3. The Temptation to Question God's Will. (7-9)

- This was a temptation to take a shortcut on God's will.
- Enjoy all the glory without the suffering.
- Enjoy the success without the work.
- This will get you there quicker and easier.

-*Why would the temptation to take a shortcut be so strong?*

-We want it quick, easy, and without the work.

-If God has a will for you, Satan has one too!

Let's Put it into Action

To defeat the temptations that rule you:

1. We must fight temptation with God's Word.

-God's Word was 100% sufficient to overcome all temptations.

-Know it, study it, memorize it, and use it.

2. We must flee temptation.

-Stop thinking on it, lingering around it, and seeking it out.

-“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.

Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.”

1 Corinthians 10:13-14

3. We must filter everything through the truth.

-Compare your thoughts, activities, and behaviors against God's Word. Take any thoughts captive that go against the truth.
(2 Corinthians 10:5)

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