



June 28, 2020

“When Temptation Comes”

Matthew 4:1-11

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In Matthew chapter four, Satan came to tempt Jesus. The tactics he used expose the three common ways that Satan tries to tempt us as well: the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. Each time Jesus was tempted, he had a Scriptural response as his weapon. In this message, Pastor Gary explains who Satan is, what temptation is, and how we can withstand temptation. Since everyone has the experience of various temptations, this teaching will be an important reminder that will strengthen us in our faith.

### Historical Background

1. Pastor Gary said, “We will all experience temptation, and Satan... is one of the primary ways that we will be tempted. Satan’s desire to tempt [us] is rooted in the idea that just as the Bible says that God loves [us] and wants none to perish and all to come to repentance, Satan hates [us], wants everyone to perish and no one to come to repentance. Satan understands that his ultimate destination is hell and, quite honestly, he simply wants to take as many people with him as possible. [He] will do whatever is necessary to destroy [our lives].”
  - a. **1 Peter 5:8–9** – *“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith...”*
2. Satan
  - a. In Hebrew, Satan means enemy or adversary; the Greek word for devil is diabolos, which means accuser.
  - b. Satan is known by a number of titles or names, including:
    - i. Tempter – **Matthew 4:3**
    - ii. Murderer – **John 8:44**

- iii. Liar and the father of lies - [John 8:44](#)
- iv. Dragon - [Revelation 12:9](#) (1984 NIV)
- v. Ancient serpent - [Revelation 12:9](#) (1984 NIV)
- vi. The one who leads the whole world astray - [Revelation 12:9](#)

### Temptation

3. Temptation by itself is not sin; giving in to temptation is a sin.
  - a. [Hebrews 4:15](#) - *“For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.”*
  - b. We can’t control when we are tempted, but we can control our response to temptation.
  
4. Temptation is common to everyone.
  - a. [1 Corinthians 10:13](#) - *“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”*
  - b. Pastor Gary said, “There might be a certain temptation or two or three that you struggle with more than someone else, but [that person has their temptations] that they struggle with more than [you]. Collectively, between all of us, we cover the spectrum of temptations. There is nothing that is not common. ... One of the things that makes us most vulnerable to giving in to temptation and thus sinning is when we think that we couldn’t really fail in that particular area. ... [This] is what the enemy loves to prey on. We can’t have a proud view on temptation and sin and think that we are invincible because the fact of the matter is that when we think or talk that way, we’ve made ourselves vulnerable, and we’ve exposed our pride. ... Don’t think that you are invincible because given the right circumstances and the right conditions and the right environment, we are each capable of committing just about any sin. If we deceive ourselves and think otherwise, [we] are setting ourselves up for failure.”
  
5. Jesus helps us when we are tempted.
  - a. [Hebrews 2:18](#) - *“For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.”*
  - b. [Luke 22:31-32](#) - *“And the Lord said, ‘Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail...’”*
    - i. Pastor Gary said, “It’s interesting that Satan had to ask. Satan doesn’t have free will in every capacity. He had to [first get permission].”

- c. **Hebrews 7:25** - *“Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”*
6. **1 John 2:15-16** - *“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world - **the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life** - is not of the Father but is of the world.”* (Emphasis added)

Satan Tempts Us  
By Appealing To The Lust Of The Flesh

7. **Matthew 4:1-4** - *“Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when **He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.** Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, ‘**If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.**’ But He answered and said, ‘It is written, *“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.”*’ ”* (Emphasis added)
- a. “That word ‘if’ should be translated ‘since.’ Satan is orthodox in his understanding of who Christ is. He knew Christ was the Son of God. The evil one’s theology on the inspiration of the Bible, the existence of God, and the person of Christ is more accurate than that of theological liberals who deny those truths. The devil believes and trembles, yet he goes on rebelling. He has never found it easy to act on what he knows.” - Erwin W. Lutzer<sup>1</sup>
  - b. Pastor Gary said, “Satan is always trying to exploit your God-given appetites, [so] that you might express those appetites in ungodly ways. Satan likes to entice us to behave impulsively, only thinking about the gratification, instead of behaving responsibly and thinking about the consequences. ... What we need to be disciplined about is to think responsibly about the consequences. ... Satan was exploiting [Jesus’ physical hunger] as a way of dominating Jesus by tempting him to use his power [to] turn stones into bread at a time when Jesus was fasting to prepare himself spiritually for the launch of his public ministry. ... Had [Jesus’ fast] been interrupted, he wouldn’t have been obedient to the purpose [of the fast, which was to prepare himself spiritually].”
  - c. Jesus’ response was to quote Scripture!
    - i. **Deuteronomy 8:3** - *“... man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.”*

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<sup>1</sup> [shorturl.at/btwMX](http://shorturl.at/btwMX)

Satan Tempts Us  
By Appealing To The Pride Of Life

8. **Matthew 4:5-7** - *“Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the **pinnacle of the temple**, and said to Him, ‘If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: ‘He shall give His angels charge over you,’ “and” In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.’ Jesus said to him, ‘It is written again, ‘You shall not tempt the LORD your God.’ ” (Emphasis added)*
- a. Pastor Gary said, “One of the things that Satan loves to do is to appeal to our desire to rule over our own lives rather than God ruling over our lives. [Satan was saying to Jesus, ‘You are in charge of your life so go ahead and throw yourself off of the temple. You don’t need to be worried about being under God’s rule; you can take charge of your own affairs.] ... [Satan wanted] Jesus to put God to the test and live with reckless, selfish behavior. That’s the pride of life. Satan quoted Scripture to tempt Jesus. ... Satan knows the Bible, but he does not submit to it. He has the head knowledge but not the heart obedience. He twists it, and distorts it, and he manipulates in order to deceive people. ... We have to be [very familiar] with the Bible to know the difference [when Satan distorts and twists Scripture]. ... A life of pride is when we are arrogant and filled with ourselves, and Satan knows a little bit about this topic because [pride] was his downfall. ... The Bible says that when [Satan/Lucifer] was in heaven, [he had free will, which is the same capacity that he has given human beings], Lucifer decided that he wanted to be like God, and pride filled his heart.”
  - b. Satan quoted Scripture:
    - i. **Psalms 91:11-12** - *“For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.”*
  - c. Satan’s pride was his downfall.
    - i. **Ezekiel 28:17** - *“Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the [earth]...”*
  - d. Jesus’ response was to quote Scripture!
    - i. **Deuteronomy 6:16** - *“You shall not tempt the LORD your God...”*

Satan Tempts Us  
By Appealing To The Lust Of The Eyes

9. **Matthew 4:8-10** - *“Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and **showed Him all the Kingdoms of the world and their glory**. And he said to Him, ‘All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.’ Then*

Jesus said to him... *'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'*” (Emphasis added)

- a. **1 John 5:19** – *“We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.”*
- b. Pastor Gary said, “There are territorial demonic influences in the world, and the United States is no exception. There is a spiritual battle going on [for our nation right now], and major cities are being influenced in different demonic ways. ... The reason [Satan could] offer the kingdoms of the world is because he has influence over kings and kingdoms. ... [This is about the sin of coveting, which] is all about looking at who someone else is or what someone else has and wishing you were that or had that. The reason it’s a sin is because it’s an affront to God. If we understand who we are and what we have is all from the loving hand of God, but yet we look at what we don’t have and who we aren’t and we covet what other people have, [like their house, car, spouse, boyfriend/girlfriend, job, personal looks, it is sin]. Coveting is basically saying to God, ‘I’m not content, God, with how you have me or what I have been given by your loving hand.’ ”
  - i. **Daniel 10:12-13** – *“Then [Gabriel] said to me, ‘Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.’ ”*
- c. Jesus’ response was to quote Scripture!
  - i. **Deuteronomy 6:13** – *“You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him...”*

### Conclusion

10. Pastor Gary said, “Every time Satan came to tempt Jesus, [Jesus] quoted Scripture. [In Ephesians 6, all of the armor of God is defensive except for one thing: *‘the sword of the Spirit,’* which is the Word of God.] ... We have to know God’s Word in order to continue to remain strong against temptations that will come our way. ... Notice the last time [Jesus] quoted Scripture, Satan left him. ... [It’s a wonderful thing to think about how God will help us and sustain us and encourage us.] ... [Luke’s gospel tells us that we should not forget to remember that the enemy won’t leave you alone as he did when he left and waited for an *‘opportune time.’*”
  - a. **Ephesians 6:10-17** – *“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the*

*darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation, of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God..."*

- b. **Matthew 4: 11** - *"Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him."*
- c. **Luke 4:13** - *"Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time."*
- d. **2 Corinthians 2:11b** - *"For we are not unaware of [Satan's] schemes."* (1984 NIV)

### Discussion Questions

1. Read **Matthew 4:1-11** to provide a foundation for your Bible study time.
2. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's opening remarks about temptation. (See #1 above)
3. Read and discuss the associated Scriptures and Pastor Gary's comments concerning the fact that temptation. (See #3 through #6 above)
4. Read and discuss the Scriptures and Pastor Gary's remarks concerning the lust of the flesh. (See #7 above)
5. Read and discuss the Scriptures and Pastor Gary's remarks concerning the pride of life. (See #8 above)
6. Read and discuss the Scriptures and Pastor Gary's remarks concerning the lust of the eyes. (See #9 above)
7. Read and discuss the Scriptures and Pastor Gary's remarks about standing firm in the face of temptation, knowing that we have an advocate and helper in Jesus. (See #10 above)
8. Close your meeting by allowing the Holy Spirit to lead your time of prayer.

\* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New King James Version (NKJV)