

Genuinely Tempted, Perfectly Obedient

Matthew 4:1-11

6/25/2017

Introduction

We're all tempted but temptation comes in different areas. If I were to list off some areas I've been tempted, there would likely be two responses . . . "I get that, I've been tempted there too" and "I can't believe he's tempted with that!" We tend to empathize with similar temptations to ours and judge temptations that are different.

Russell Moore, author – story of checking in to a hotel while his family waited in the car and he noticed the gal behind the counter was laughing at his jokes, and giving him a little wink, and he found himself noticing her dimples, and enjoying the interaction when his son came in and said, "Daddy!" and it scared him. He hadn't done anything suggestive, hadn't even "lusted after her in his heart" but it scared him because for a moment he forgot who he was as a husband, a father, a follow of Christ. And what terrified him was the question in his mind, "what if this had been on a business trip when he was alone? What if instead of just friendliness she had really taken an interest in him?" The wildness and power of temptation terrified him in that moment. That wildness is common to man and has been since Adam and Eve.

It's been said that there are tracks of blood that move outward from Eden. From paradise to jealousy, murder, assault, polygamy, idolatry. Character after character, including the nation of Israel, is depicted as a deeply flawed image bearer of God, falling to temptation, sometimes in catastrophic ways.

If you have eyes to see, you know well the pull of temptation. Maybe toward stinging words disguised as a joke, maybe stealing time from your boss, maybe irrational anger, maybe towards a romantic relationship with someone at work but you're already married.

Today we'll see that the Son of God experienced temptation. After identifying with sinners in His baptism, He now faces temptation to sin head on. And, spoiler alert, He wins! What's instructive for us is why His obedience matters to us and what we can learn from Him.

1. Jesus' temptation was God-**ordained** but not God-**inflicted**. (4:1-2)
 - a. Occurred immediately after the baptism (identifying with sinners), Holy Spirit coming upon Him, and affirmation by the Father.
 - b. Led up by the Spirit not to run away from the tempter but to confront and defeat the tempter through His obedience.
 - i. Matthew – Led; Mark – impelled
 - c. Led by the Spirit but tempted by Satan – God-ordained but not God-inflicted
 - i. **James 1:13** Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.
 - d. As the first Adam failed with every tree of the garden for food, the second Adam succeeded in the wilderness with no food with desert stones mocking his hunger.
 - i. Luke brings out the contrast with Adam by placing his genealogy between the baptism and temptation and tracing lineage all the way back to Adam.
 - ii. **Romans 5:19** For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.

- iii. Where Adam and Eve failed in response to temptation, Jesus would succeed. Where the Israelites failed, Jesus would succeed. Where Adam became disobedient by taking and eating, Jesus will be obedient by not taking and not eating. (Icthus)
- iv. Cheerleaders in high school while playing basketball – Go! Fight! Win! As if the Spirit is saying, “Go! Fight! Win! On behalf of those you came to save!”
 - 1. He runs into the battle instead of away from the battle
- v. His fasting in the wilderness increased the pressure and difficulty of obedience.
 - 1. “Hangry” to describe the condition of being so hungry that it comes out as anger against people, usually the ones you love the most. We think less rationally and are more susceptible to temptation toward anger.
- e. How could he be tempted if He never sinned?
 - i. **Hebrews 2:18** For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.
 - ii. **Hebrews 4:15b** but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are*, yet without sin.
 - iii. The temptation meter turned up to 10 without giving in.
 - 1. He has been tempted to a far greater degree than anyone else.
 - 2. Part of the reason we give in to temptation sometimes is to relieve the pressure of the temptation.
 - a. Like water building up against the back of a dam. Once it breaks, the pressure is relieved (and the dam is destroyed!). If it doesn’t break, the pressure continues to build.
 - 3. Who exerted the most effort, a champion weight lifter who successfully lifted the weight over his head, or another contestant who tried but dropped the weight part way through the lift?
 - 4. As a side note, it is encouraging to note the difference between temptation and sin. Temptation is not sin in itself until it is acted upon. Don’t allow yourself to become discouraged merely because you are tempted.
- 2. Satan tempted Jesus to use His **Sonship** to bypass his **servanthood**. (4:3-4)
 - a. “If” – GK construction that has the idea of “if – and let’s assume for the sake of argument – you are God’s Son”
 - b. Temptation to use His sonship in a way inconsistent with His God-ordained mission. Just as He would later be urged to come down from the cross if He was really the Son of God (27:40).
 - i. Yes, He is the Son. Yes, He will reign. But first He must walk the path of suffering.
 - ii. You’ve got these powers, use them! Take care of yourself!
 - c. Quotes Deut. 8:3
 - i. **Deuteronomy 8:2-3** "You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not."He humbled you and let you

be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD.

- ii. **John 4:34** Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.
- iii. Ichthus – where Adam became disobedient by taking and eating, Jesus means to be obedient by not taking and by not eating.

3. Satan tempted Jesus to test God rather than trust God. (4:5-7)

- a. Pinnacle was the highest part of the temple complex where there was a building combined with a retaining wall for a total height of 450 feet.
- b. In this temptation, Satan quotes the Bible but misapplies it.
 - i. Quotes Psalm 91:11-12 and his quotation falls within the normal pattern of NT quotes of OT so not distorting the quotation. However his application is flawed as Jesus' response demonstrates.
- c. Quotes Deuteronomy 6:16 but referring to an incident at Massah in Exodus 17:1-7 when they journeyed in the wilderness and came to a place where there was no water to drink. They quarreled with Moses and tested the Lord. It says they tested the Lord, saying, "is the Lord among us, or not?"
 - i. They demanded further proof of his presence and kindness to them. Likewise, Satan is tempting Jesus to demand further proof of God's care and provision for him. As Moses said in Deut 6, do not put the Lord your God to the test.
 - ii. The demand for miraculous proof from God is not acceptable. To willingly throw himself down from the pinnacle of the temple is even worse than the Israelites at Massah because there the people at least had a real need (water) where Jesus would be needlessly throwing himself down to compel God to save Him.
- d. College student from MT sharing testimony – "If you're real, cause this pencil to float in mid air when I drop it"
 - i. As if God should be expected to play by our rules and follow our demands if He wants us to trust Him.

4. Satan tempted Jesus to take the crown before the cross. (4:8-11)

- a. Satan showed Jesus the kingdoms of the world
 - i. **Luke 4:5** And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.
 - ii. Indicates it may be more than merely going to a tall mountain, perhaps a vision of some sort also.
- b. Satan has a temporary sort of rule over the earth
 - i. **2 Corinthians 4:4** in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
 - ii. **1 John 5:19** We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.
- c. He is the Davidic King who will rule but here is a temptation to rule without the suffering, to sidestep the cross.

- i. The only cost was idolatry.
- ii. Sheds light on Jesus sharp response to Peter in 16:23 when Peter made a similar suggestion that He wouldn't go to the cross.
- d. His response was to quote Deuteronomy 6:13
- e. The devil left although Luke tells us it wasn't the end of Jesus' temptations
 - i. **Luke 4:13** When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time.

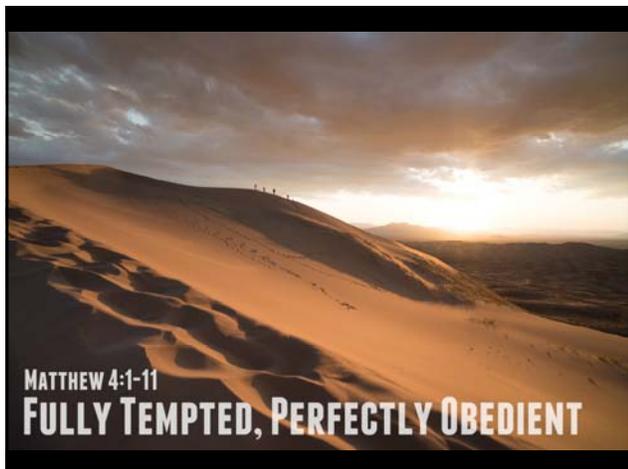
5. Key truths

- a. Jesus perfectly resisted sin in your place.
 - i. His active obedience is credited to us.
 - 1. When confronted with your own failure in the place of temptation can say, "Lord, I'm so thankful that Jesus obeyed perfectly. I marvel at His obedience. Thank you for crediting that to me! Help me now to say no to sin in gratefulness and to display your glory."
 - ii. **Hebrews 7:26-27** For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; ²⁷ who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the *sins* of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.
 - iii. **John 8:29** "And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him."
 - iv. **Romans 5:19** For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.
 - v. This is the major point here. Not primarily a lesson in how to defeat personal temptation, although that lesson is there.
 - vi. History of the OT is littered with failure. From David through Solomon to a series of kings. A righteous king was promised, but king after king disqualified himself. Until this one.
- b. Obedience in the face of temptation is possible for you.
 - i. Jesus obeyed in the power of the Holy Spirit by relying on God's Word.
 - 1. You have those same resources available to you.
 - ii. Your temptations will not be identical to Jesus' but they will be "common to man."
 - iii. **1 Corinthians 10:13** No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.
 - 1. Jerry Bridges – Don't believe everything you think.
 - 2. Common to man vs "no one else understands this"
 - a. Like Jesus you will be tempted to provide for yourself and exalt yourself, casting aside the Fatherhood of God.
 - 3. God is faithful vs "God doesn't care about me"
 - 4. Not tempted beyond what you are able to resist vs "this is too hard, I can't say no"

5. Way of escape vs “I’m stuck and can’t change”

c. Jesus understands your temptation.

- i. **Hebrews 4:15** For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are, yet* without sin.
- ii. He understood it fully in His omniscience. He gained an experiential understanding as well.
- iii. Christianity is utterly unique in that God suffers along with His people. He can empathize and sympathize with us.



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