

THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST TEACHES TODAY

by David Lee Burris

A Compassionate Call to

Discipleship The Three Temptations of Jesus

#1 To Question God's Provision and Care 4:3-4	#2 To Questions God's Purposes and Plan 4:5-8	#3 To Question God's Power and Promises 4:9-13
You're Hungry...Make bread out of stones!	Worship Me...and get Your Kingdom Now!	Take the Plunge...and watch God rescue you
"Does God really love you?"	"Is God's will best for you?"	"Can you count on God's promises to you?"
"Shouldn't you find a way to meet your own needs when they're urgent?"	"Can you really trust God with your future?"	"Does it really matter if you do things God's way?"
Deuteronomy 8:3	Deuteronomy 6:13	Deuteronomy 6:16

For He received human nature without sin, in the purity which it had in the state of innocence. In the same way He might have assumed human nature without defects. Thus, it is clear that Christ did not contract these defects as if taking them upon Himself as due to sin, but by His own will.

This mode of taking on defects is what is called “assumption,” and surpasses the treatment of some which affirms this action is properly ascribed to the divine will alone, since the action is concerned with the *creation* of Christ’s human will.

– *Book Review*

Does Jesus' Fast Prove the Bible to Be Unreliable?



In Matthew chapter four, we read about Jesus' temptation by Satan in the wilderness. The text says that Jesus "fasted forty days and forty nights." How could Jesus possibly live that long without eating? Does the length of Jesus' fast cast doubt on the reliability of the Bible?

As is always the case, deeper study of this allegation always vindicates Scripture. First, while one might assume biblical fasting always means to abstain from food and drink, a study of examples of fasting in Scripture reveals that there are various types of fasting¹

- The "Absolute Fast," where an individual abstains from both food and water. While this kind of fast is mentioned several times in Scripture (e.g., Jonah 3:7; Zechariah 7:5-6; Luke 5:33; Acts 9:9), it was carried out over relatively short periods of time—presumably less than three days (Esther 4:16; Ezra 10:6-10). In rare cases in Scripture, an absolute fast lasted for longer periods of time, wherein a person could only have survived with supernatural assistance (Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:9; 1 Kings 19:1). However, in those cases, assistance from God is implied by the text.
- The "Partial Fast," where one's diet is restricted, rather than complete abstinence occurring (Daniel 1:8,12; 10:3).
- The "Normal Fast," where an individual abstains only from solid food, but not water, for a period of time (2 Samuel 12:16-20; Joel 1:14-16). [Note: the Hebrew term for fast (*tsurwm*) literally means "to abstain from food."²]

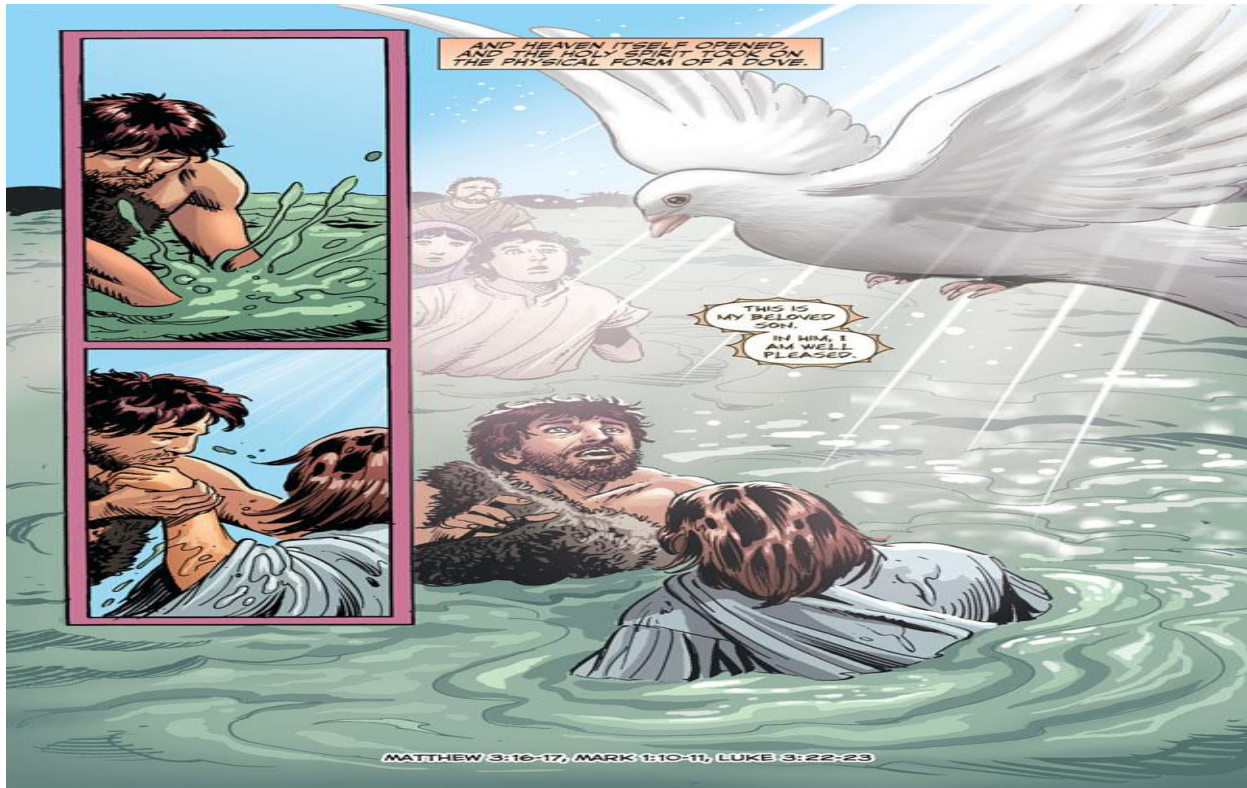
In what form of fasting did Jesus engage? It is possible that Jesus was supernaturally sustained throughout His fast. In his comments on Matthew 4:2, J.W. McGarvey argued that **Jesus' temptation fast was an example of a supernatural fast, arguing that the phrase, "afterward He was hungry" "implies that his appetite was miraculously suspended during the forty days."** In other words, He was not hungry during the 40 days and nights, but was hungry only "afterward."⁴ Since the Spirit is mentioned as being involved in the temptation period (Matt. 4:1; Luke 4:1), it is not unreasonable to suppose that miraculous activity was involved,⁵ for the very same reason that we would suppose Moses was supernaturally sustained by God on Mount Sinai in Exodus 34:28 for "forty days and forty nights" without his eating or drinking.⁶ While the suggestion that a miracle saved Jesus would be unpalatable to non-Bible believers, Scripture is saturated with examples of supernatural activity (and, indeed, science demands that supernatural activity has happened many times in the past⁷).⁸ Since Scripture has divine characteristics that prove it to be from God (the Bible itself is a miracle),⁹ when it records miraculous occurrences, we know that they happened.

It is probable that Jesus' fast was a "Normal Fast."¹⁰ If that is true, is it reasonable to suppose that Jesus could have survived for 40 days without food? ¹¹ While a person could only survive without water for a week in "comfortable surroundings," documented cases of people surviving for 40 days or longer with water but no food exist,¹³ with body weight (especially fat content), genetic makeup, gender, and age affecting those survival times.¹⁴

Dr. Peter Janiszewski wrote: “Generally, it appears as though humans can survive without any food for **30-40 days**, as long as they are properly hydrated. Severe symptoms of starvation begin around 35-40 days, and as highlighted by the hunger strikers of the Maze Prison in Belfast in the 1980s, death can occur at around 45-61 days.”¹⁵ One of the most remarkable fasts was undertaken by Terence MacSwiney. In a hunger strike, MacSwiney went more than two months without food, dying of starvation after 74 days.¹⁶

How is that possible for the human body to go so long without food? One reason is the body was designed with the ability to adjust its metabolism when energy is scarce.¹⁷ After your body converts its food into glucose and once its glucose supply is exhausted (24 hours), your body begins accessing energy in different ways. First, the liver is stimulated in order to make more glucose. After two-to-three days, fat tissues become the main energy source, and finally, your body enters into ketosis, where fatty acids are used by the liver to form ketones which fuel the brain. After the body’s fatty acids have been depleted, the body switches to muscle protein as its primary energy source, until the muscles in the body (the heart too) have been depleted.¹⁸ Again, the length of time that this process takes hinges on many factors. It is ironic that the most up-to-date research puts the general limit of fasts at 30-40 days. Thus, not only is there nothing about the 40-day fast of Christ that calls into question the Bible’s accuracy, but it actually coincides perfectly with modern research, adding yet another piece of evidence of the Bible’s truthfulness.

THE TEMPTATIONS TIMELINE ILLUSTRATED:

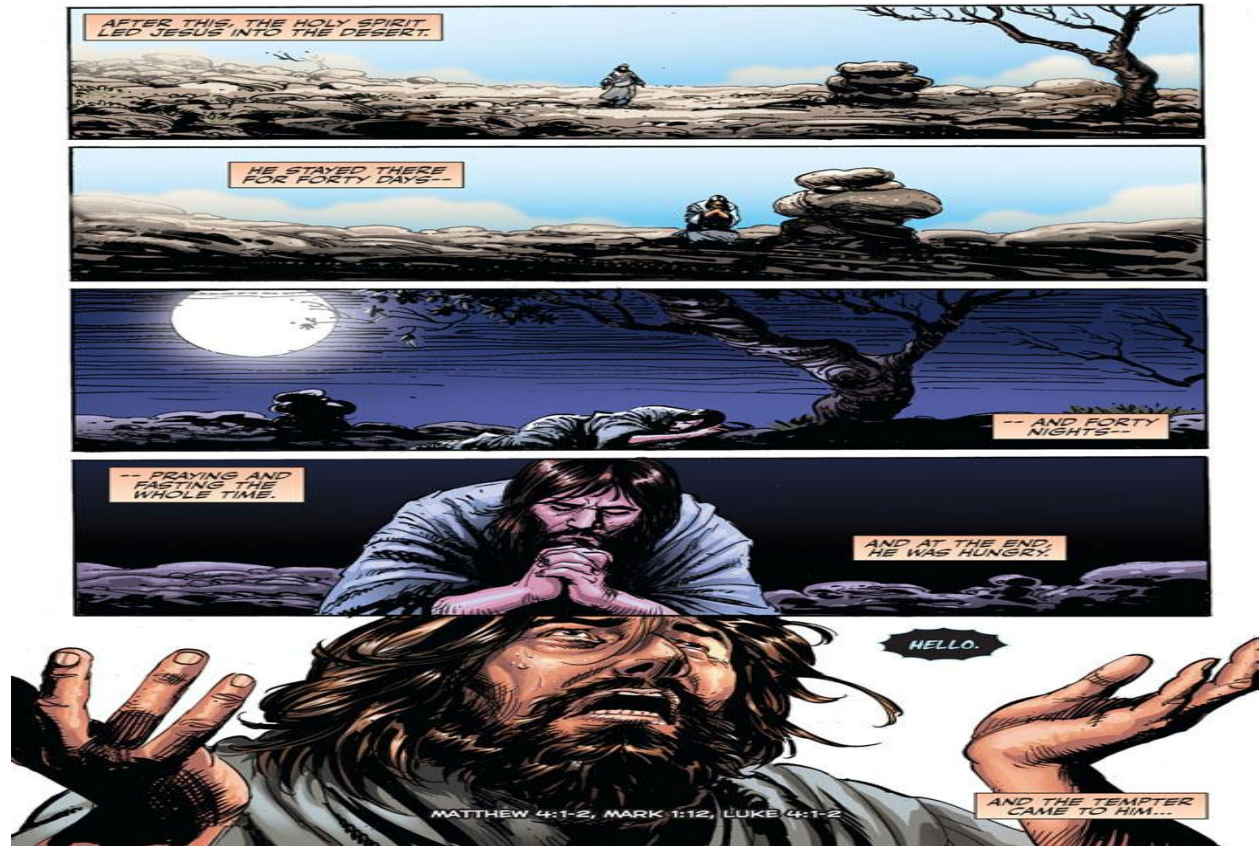


Expository Commentary

Jamieson – Fausset – Brown

- 1. Mark's Word (1:12) Links After Christ's Baptism & Flows With Luke's Word (4:1) That Jesus Was 'Led Up Of The Spirit'
- 2. "To Be Tempted" – The Greek Word (*peirazein*) means simply to try or make proof of. The Spirit conducted Him into the wilderness simply to have His faith tried; but as the agent in this trial was to be the wicked one, whose whole object would be to seduce Him from His allegiance to God, it was a temptation in the bad sense of the term.
- 3. "He Afterward Hungered" – Links To Moses (Exodus 34: 28) & Elijah (1Kings 19: 9: 8) For The Same Period. The tempter's whole object during the forty days was to generally dislodge from His breast the consciousness of His Sonship.
- 3. In Mark's brief notice of the temptation there is one expressive particular not given either by Matthew or by Luke – that "He was with the wild beasts," no doubt to add terror to the solitude.

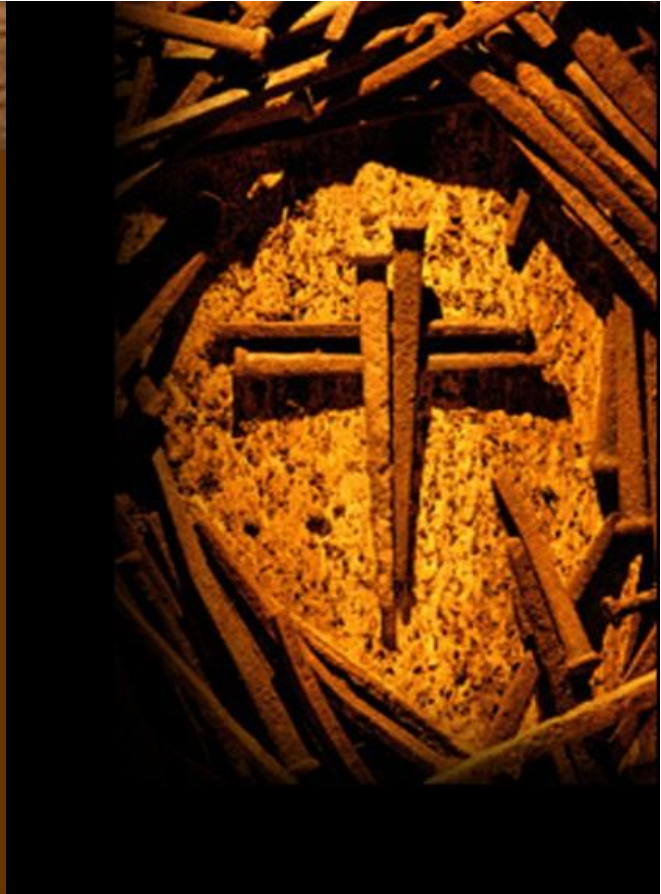




MEDITERRANEAN BIBLE RIM CULTURE

Professor Richard Rohrbaugh
Of Lewis & Clark Has Outlined:

- Satan Challenged The Lord's Status Ranking Through Family By Way Of Charging Repeatedly '*If you are the Son of God...*'
- Under This Classical World Honor System The Only Acceptable Way Of Demonstrating The Rank Of The Loyal Son Was By His Quoting The Beloved Father.
- Lord Quotes Deuteronomy Linking To Manna & The Metaphor Of Forty
- In That Sea Rim World To Resist One's Adversary For 40 Days Made Any Duel By Then A Draw – W/O A Status Game Winner.



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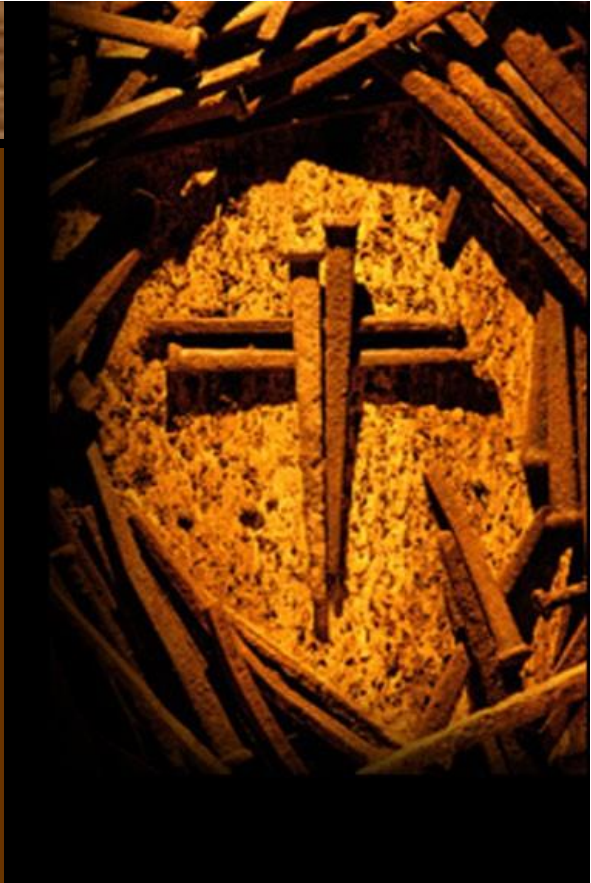
- What Immediately Followed Was The Offer Of Exchange. The Son Of Man Would Get The Due Honor Of Men By Paying Homage To Satan.
- To 'Worship' In Literal Greek Meant 'Fall Down In Front Of' To Privately Greet By A Kiss On The Cheek Was Seen As Polite Deference To Another. But The Public Kissing Of Others' Feet Was The Salutation & Expected Courtesy Of The Social Inferior - See Acts 10.



Expository Commentary

Jamieson – Fausset – Brown

- 3. **“And When The Tempter Came To Him”** – Evidently we have a new scene.
- 3. **“He Said, If Thou Be The Son Of God, Command This Stone That It Be Made Bread”** -
Why linger for weeks in this desert, wandering among the wild beasts & craggy rocks, unhonored, unattended, unpitied, ready to starve for want of the necessaries of life?
Is this befitting ‘the Son of God’?
- 4. **“And Jesus Answered Him, Saying, It Is Written (Deut. 8: 3), That Man Shall Not Live By Bread Alone, But By Every Word Of God”**



Homiletic Commentary

Pulpit Wilderness Presumption & Ostentation
Second Temptation In Matthew's Gospel:
Book Of Luke - Chapter 4 - Verses 9 Thru 12

- > ***The Temptation Of Dueling Scripture*** -
Jesus must consider what plan would be best for beginning his public work. This must have been with him a distinct subject of thought. And now Satan suggests that if he precipitated himself from the pinnacle of the temple into the court, and did so with impunity as God's Son, the people could not but hail him as the promised Messiah. He should put his Sonship, the tempter suggests, to the test.



The “pinnacle of the temple” was probably not the actual roof of the temple. Scholars are not sure where it would have been, but many believe that it was probably a part of the temple called Solomon’s Porch, which overlooked the Kidron Valley. The drop was probably at least 450 feet (over a football field in height) in the time of Christ—a height that would almost certainly kill a man.

APOLOGETICS PRESS



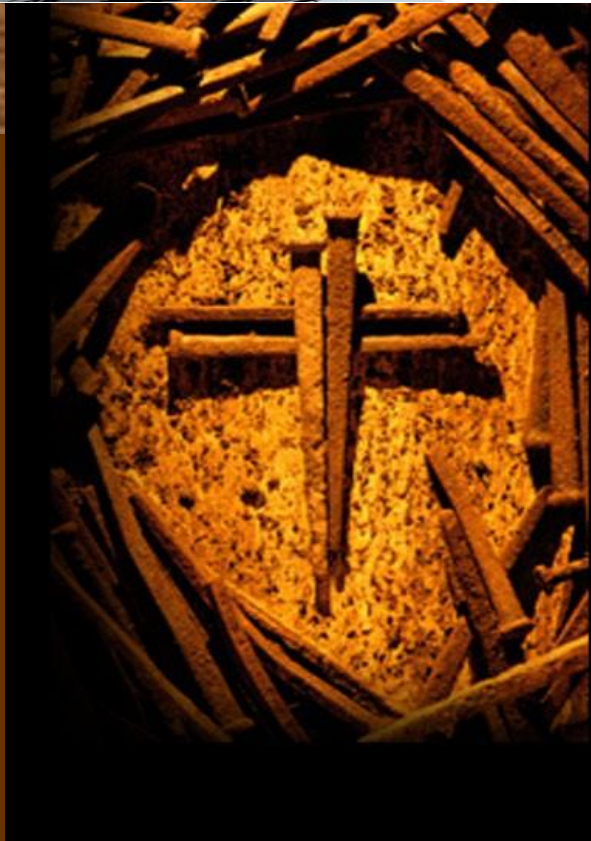


Homiletic Commentary

Preacher's Commentary \Person Of The King\
: Testing & Ministry Of The King
Second Temptation In Matthew's Gospel:
Book Of Luke - Chapter 4 - Verses 9 Thru 12

➤ **Psalm 91: 11 - Vs - Deuteronomy 6: 16 -**

The second temptation was to make Jesus a wonder-worker and thereby attract people to follow Him. The tempter projected Him into a vision of standing atop the temple on Mt. Zion. At the corner where the Royal Porch & Solomon's Porch met was a drop of 450 feet into the valley of the brook Kidron. Arabbinal tradition reads, "When the King Messiah reveals Himself, then He comes and stands on the roof of the Holy Place." This means to appear from above, miraculously introducing His *national leadership*.

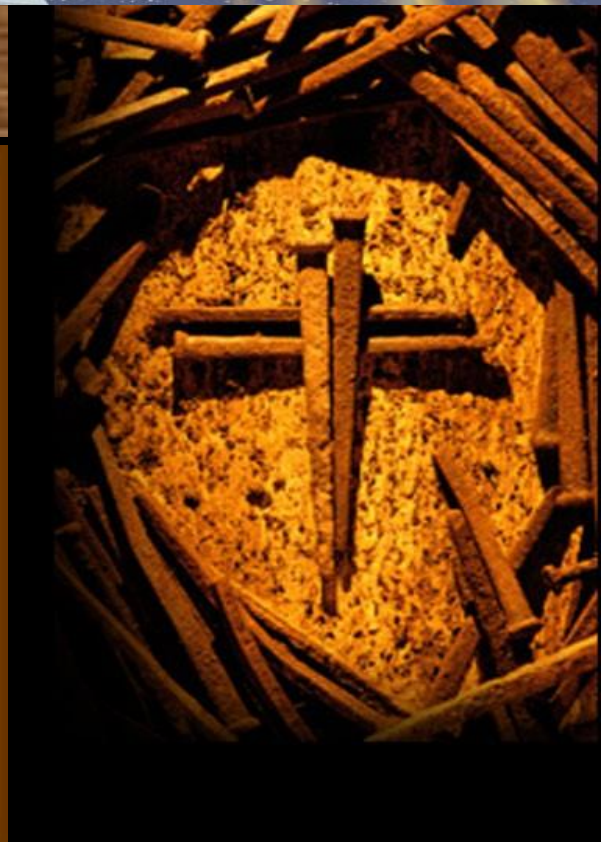




Homiletic Commentary

Pulpit's Bullets As Regards Purposed Intent:

- Whether Temptations Of Appetite Or Ambition – Whether Necessary As Perfection Of His Human Nature Or For His Savior Role – The Three Temptations **Recorded** Mirror Those The Faithful Feel & Thus We Find Here For Our Edification.
- It will be remembered that we are dealing with a narrative of real transactions. It is not a poem, not a parable.
- Here is the tempter who is tempting us, adapting the form of his solicitations to our tempers, our endowments, our circumstances. Here are the characteristics of his approaches, his doubts, his 'ifs', his quotations from Scripture when it suits his purpose to do so, his three great heads of temptation – that which seeks us thru bodily need or fleshly appetite, that which seeks us thru even our purer and higher instincts, that which would draw us into the net by stirring up the pride of life.





MATTHEW 4:9-10, LUKE 4:6-8

Homiletic Commentary

Preacher's Points Regarding Purposed Intent He Had His Sense Of Vocation Tested With A Choice Between Two Kingdoms

- Tempter Attack From Three Angles:
- First was the temptation to turn the stone into bread, that is to use His powers selfishly. There is an inference that He could become a "bread Messiah," a king who would use His power to meet man's material needs and thereby secure his service in His kingdom.
- The second temptation was to make Jesus a wonder-worker and thereby attract people to follow Him.
- The third temptation focused directly on Jesus' ultimate mission. He had come to seek and save the lost, to reconcile men to God. The vision of the world that He came to save moved before Him.
- The tempter was suggesting that Jesus take another route to win the world than the way of the Cross. But Jesus knew that He could not defeat evil by compromising with evil.



MEDITERRANEAN BIBLE RIM CULTURE

Professor Richard Rohrbaugh Of Lewis & Clark Has Outlined:

- As Christ Conveys His Experience In Public To The Narrative Of Luke His Middle Eastern Audience Has Likely Had Their Ears Perked By Recitation Of The Old Testament Scripture and By His Approach Of The Good Son.
- After The Significant Period Of Forty Days, When Satan Ceases Cosmic Assault & Readily Departs, Many If Not Most Of This Targeted Audience Are Now Receptive To The Possibility That There Maybe More Here Than Meets The Eye With This Low Born & Very Humble Carpenter's Son Of Nazareth.



Temptation of Jesus

We learn how to handle temptation:

- Information = “It is written”
- Determination = “Get thee hence Satan”
- Dedication = “Him only shalt thou serve”

No degree of temptation justifies
any degree of sin !

Torturous Temptation For Truth

- As Dietrich Bonhoeffer Wrote To The Western Mindset In The 20th Century Linking Concepts Of Suffering With Those Of Human Tempting...
- Be Open To The 1st Century Oriental Versus Occidental Mindset Where Torture & Fasting Were Considered Induced Occasions Of Absolute Honesty & Heightened Lucidity.
- Torture Was An External Initiative While Fasting Was An Internal Discipline Both Bringing The Individual To Their Edge Of Reality Where Resided Truth In Its Purity.
- Jesus Experienced Both Forms Together By Way Of The Intrusion Of Satan - We Have An Emotional Trial Along With The Physical One.

BONHOEFFER ON THE THREE TEMPTATIONS:

GENERAL SUFFERING. If the Christian should fall into serious sickness, bitter poverty or any other severe suffering, he should know that the devil has his hand in the game. The Christian perceives in suffering it being a **temptation of Satan to separate him from God.** It is here that murmuring against God has its origin. While God disappears from man's sight in the fire of lust, the heat of affliction easily leads him into conflict with God. The Christian threatens to doubt the love of God. Why does God allow this suffering? God's justice then is incomprehensible to him. Why must it happen to me? What have I done to deserve it? By suffering our God should become our joy. Job is the Biblical prototype of this temptation. Everything is taken from Job by Satan, in order that in the end he may curse God.

This means for the Christian, tempted by suffering, should protest against suffering as a protest against the devil and in assertion of innocence. The devil has broken into God's order and is the cause of suffering. Suffering, therefore, leads to the knowledge of sin, and thereby, to the return to God. All suffering must lead the Christian to the strengthening of his faith and not to defection. While the flesh shuns suffering and rejects it, the Christian sees his suffering as Christ's suffering.

Now the Christian understands his suffering, also, as **the temptation of Christ in him**. That leads him into patience and into the silent, waiting endurance of temptation, and fills him with gratitude; for the more the old man dies, the more certainly lives the new man; the deeper man is driven into suffering, the nearer he comes to Christ.

Just because Satan took everything from Job, he cast him on God alone. So, for the Christian, his suffering becomes a protest against the devil, a recognition of his own sin, the righteous judgement of God, death of his old man, and communion with Jesus Christ.

SUFFERING THAT'S FOR CHRIST'S SAKE. Whereas the Christian must endure the sufferings of this world, just like the godless, there is reserved for the Christian a suffering of which the world knows nothing: suffering for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ (1st Peter 4. 12, 17). This suffering, too, happens to him as temptation (1st Peter 4. 12; Judges 2.22).

While the Christian can understand general sufferings as consequences of the general sin of the flesh, in which he too shares, the fact of his suffering on account of his righteousness, on account of his faith, must indeed seem strange to him.

That the righteous man suffers on the account of his sin is understandable; but that righteous man suffers for the sake of righteousness, that can easily lead him to the stumbling-block in Jesus Christ.

Temptation here is so much the greater than in the suffering which is common to all (sickness, poverty, etc.), which cannot be avoided, because this suffering for Christ's sake would end immediately with denial of Christ. It is therefore to some extent voluntary suffering from which I can escape again.

And just here Satan has a free field of operation. He stirs up the longing of the flesh for happiness, he makes the good insights of the Christian take up arms against him, so that he can show the Christian the folly & wickedness of his voluntary suffering, the pious way out, the special solution of his conflict. Unavoidable suffering is indeed a severe temptation; but much heavier is the suffering which, in the opinion of the world and of my flesh and even of my pious thoughts, is avoidable.

The freedom of man is deployed against the bondage of the Christian. **That is a real temptation to apostasy.** But the Christian will not be surprised by this temptation; he ought rather to understand that he is **here led right into the communion of the sufferings of Christ** (I Pet. 4.13). The temptation of the devil drives the Christian afresh into the arms of Jesus Christ, the crucified.

THE TEMPTATIONS OF THE SPIRIT. **Jesus repelled the second temptation of Satan with the words "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."** Satan had tempted Jesus to ask for a visible acknowledgement of his divine Sonship, not to let himself be satisfied with God's Word and promise, and to want more than faith. Jesus called such a demand tempting God, that is, the putting to the proof of the faithfulness of God, the truth and the love of God, and attributing to God faithlessness, falsehood and lack of love, instead of looking for them in oneself.

All temptation which aims directly at our faith in salvation brings us into the danger of tempting God. The temptations of the spirit, therefore, with which the devil tempts Christians, have a double aim. **The believer is to fall into the sin of spiritual pride or perish in the sin of despair. But in both sins there is the one sin of tempting God.**

Lastly there follows the complete hardening of the heart in sin, in fearlessness and security before God, **hypocritical piety.**

Desperation. The temptation to desperation, to despair (acedia) corresponds to the temptation to securitas. Old long-forgotten guilt suddenly rears up its head before me, as if it had happened today. God was never with me, God is not with me, God will never forgive me; for my sin is so great that it cannot be forgiven.

Thus, man's spirit is in rebellion against the Word of God. **Man now demands an experience, proof of the grace of God.** Otherwise, in his despair of God he will no longer listen to his Word. And this despair drives him either into the sin of blasphemy or into self-destruction.

In ingratitude, in disobedience, and in hopelessness, man hardens himself against the grace of God. **Satan demands a sign that he's a saint.** The promise of God in Christ isn't any longer sufficient. "And that is the hardest and highest temptation and suffering, when the heart of man feels nothing less than that God has abandoned him with his grace."

When Satan deploys God's Word against God's Word in Christ, when he becomes the accuser who allows man to find no comfort, then we ought to think of the following: **First**, it is the devil himself who here puts God's Word into the mouth. **Second**, we should never argue with Satan about our sins, but we should speak about our sins only with Jesus. **Third**, we should tell the devil that Jesus has called to himself not the righteous but sinners. **Fourth**, God does still purpose great things even with me, as though he had prepared an inheritance in heaven even for me. **Fifth**, I ought to thank God for his judgement on me, which shows me he "loves me.

Sixth, I must recognize that I' am here thrust by the devil into the highest temptation of Christ on the cross, as he cried: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." There I hear the words: "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my power is made perfect in weakness" (II Cor. 12.9). **Lastly, in gratitude for temptation overcome I know, at the same time, that no temptation is more terrible than to be without temptation!**

THE LAST TEMPTATION. **How Satan repeats the third temptation of Jesus on believers:** Here it is a matter of the unconcealed appearance of Satan, in which he then tempts us to a willful and final defection from God, by promising us, through the worship of Satan, all power and all happiness on this earth.

THE LEGITIMATE STRUGGLE. **ALL temptation is the temptation of Jesus Christ and all victory is victory of Jesus Christ.** All temptation leads the believer into the deepest solitude, into abandonment by men and by God. But in this solitude he finds Jesus Christ, man and God.

The blood of Christ and the example of Christ and the prayer of Christ are his help and his strength. The Book of Revelation says of the redeemed: "They overcome . . . because of the blood of the lamb" (Rev. 12.11). **Not by the spirit, but by the blood of Christ is the devil overcome.**

Then, too, there is the image of Jesus which we should look upon in temptation. His patience in suffering is the death of the flesh, the suffering of our flesh is made to seem of small account, we are preserved from all pride and comforted in all sorrow.

From heaven the Lord gives to the defenseless heavenly armor before which, though men's eyes don't see it. He clothes us with the armor of God, he gives into our hand the shield of faith, he sets upon our brow the helmet of salvation, he gives us the sword of the spirit in the right hand. It is the garment of Christ, the robe of his victory, that he puts upon his struggling community.

Together with James we say: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he hath been approved, he shall receive the crown of life, which God promised to them that love him" (James 1.12).

The promise of Jesus proclaims: "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom" (Luke 22.28).

Bonhoeffer , Dietrich. *Creation and Fall Temptation: Two Biblical Studies* (pp. 134-147). Kindle Edition.

Temptation of Jesus

We learn how to handle temptation:

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Tempted in ALL The Ways Like We Are?



Q:

Jesus was never married and did not have to deal with the temptations that come with marriage. There are many other things He didn't encounter while on Earth. How could Jesus be tempted in all ways like we are?

A:

In Hebrews 4:15, the Bible discusses Jesus and says: "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." While this statement is very clear, sometimes we go through temptations in this life that seem to be wholly different from anything Jesus experienced. Jesus never had to deal with the IRS. While Jesus was on Earth, He never dealt with a rebellious child who was addicted to drugs. Jesus wasn't bombarded by pornography as He walked the streets of Palestine like we are today when we check our email or innocently search the Internet for information. How were Jesus' temptations the same as ours?

As we look for answers to this question, we realize that each of us sometimes thinks we are dealing with something that nobody has ever experienced. The Bible, however, explains: "No temptation has overtaken you except such that is common to man" (1 Corinthians 10:13). The Bible further clarifies this idea when it elaborates more about the sin we are tempted to commit. In 1 John 2:15-16, we read: "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."

This text tells us that there are **three basic categories** into which all sins fall. Every temptation that any person has ever experienced was a temptation to sin through **the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life.**

It is no accident that during the temptations of Jesus, Satan presented the Savior with three opportunities to sin. First, Satan tempted Jesus to turn stones into bread after Jesus had been fasting for forty days. Satan attempted to get Jesus to give into the “lust of the flesh” and use His powers to alleviate His hunger (Matt. 4:3). Satan then tempted Jesus to prove that He was the Son of God by throwing Himself off the pinnacle of the Temple (Matthew 4:4-7). Satan appealed to the pride of life by daring Jesus to prove Who He really was. Of course, Jesus countered with Scripture and didn’t fall into the sin of pride. Finally, Satan showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and “their glory” (Matthew 4:8). The Enemy promised he would give these kingdoms to Jesus if He would simply fall down and worship him. By presenting the kingdoms and their glory to Christ, Satan attempted to cause Jesus to fall into the lust of the eyes and covetously desire what He did not yet have. Once again, Jesus resisted the temptation. **Thus, we see that Satan’s onslaught on the Lord with his temptations designed to appeal to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life summed up the Enemy’s entire repertoire of temptation.**

With this understanding of sin, we can now apply what we know to Jesus’ temptations. The Bible does not say that Jesus experienced every **situation** that we have experienced. He never drove in a car and had to deal with being cut off by a reckless driver. He was not tempted to overeat ice cream. And He had no babies of His own that cried incessantly and kept Him up till the wee hours of the morning. All of these situations, however, have three things in common. Each temptation presented to people in those situations involves the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life.

This relationship between temptations and situations can be illustrated in this way. Once upon a time a father and son were walking through a music store looking at the different instruments. The son had been having trouble at school with some bullies and the father was telling him Jesus understood all about his problems, since Jesus was tempted in all ways like we are. The son was incredulous. He did not see how Jesus had ever experienced what he was dealing with. Just then, the pair walked by a piano. The father directed the son's attention to the piano and asked his son, "Do you think every song in the world has been played on that piano?" The boy quickly said that such would be impossible. The father then walked over to the piano and methodically tapped every key, causing each to ring out its individual note. He then asked his son, "Has every key on this piano been played?" The son then understood the point. Even though every song in the world could never be played on a single piano (situations), every key on the piano could be played (temptations).

While Jesus might never have been in the **exact same situation** that you or I find ourselves in, we can know that the temptations He experienced that involved the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life were **the exact same temptations** we experience.

Christ Tempted and Sympathising

W. Kelly.

Christ sympathises not with sin, nor with sinners, but with the suffering saints of God and at the same time looks back upon His own experience when He was upon earth. He was tempted, but then the temptation was not in any way from within. There was in Him no propensity to evil that answered to the trial of Satan; but, on the contrary, all that the enemy found was dependence on God, simple unwavering faith in His word; never a carnal working, as in our hearts.

Hence, as there was in Christ the total absence of self-will inwardly, as He in every respect hated and rejected evil, there was nothing but thorough suffering. The effect of temptation on fallen humanity is not suffering, but rather pleasure. Christ knew nothing of this in either His person or His experience. Of motions in the flesh, inward solicitations to sin, He had none: He “knew no sin.”

It was for His public work; it was with a view to the display of divine power in the humble and obedient Man: “him [the Son of man] hath God the Father sealed” (John 6:27). His own internal experience was not more really holy or acceptable to God afterwards than before. No doubt Satan did then come & try our Lord — did set in movement every possible engine of temptation, as we are told in Luke 4:13. But “temptation” here is used, as scripture ordinarily uses it, not for the working of inward frailty, but for the devil’s presentation of objects here to allure from the path of God.

The **first** of the three great temptations, when the forty days' exposure to the devil was ended, was the suggestion which appealed to the Lord's feelings of hunger. "If thou art Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." Why not? Surely it was an admirable opportunity for Him to prove His divine mission, as well as to satisfy the natural need of the body. This was what may be called the *natural* appeal.

The **second** (at least in the Gospel of Luke, who was inspired to present the temptations in their moral order, whether or not the order of historic sequence was preserved) was the *worldly* appeal — the offer of all the kingdoms of the world on condition of Christ's doing homage before the devil.

The **third** (in Luke—for Matthew here keeps to the simple order of the facts and shows it was the second historically) was the *spiritual* appeal, and so not merely on the pinnacle or edge of the temple, but through the word of God. But in all, the Holy One of God defeated the devil, and this through the word used in obedience.

Thus, we've seen the Lord entirely refuses the temptation to make the stones bread. It was the devil's suggestion, not God's word, which itself, and not bread, is the true food of the believer's life. With unwavering perfectness Christ lives as man, the Son of God on earth, by the word of God; He does homage to Jehovah His God, and serves Him only, as the Son of man; and trusts Him as the Messiah, not tempting Him as did [the exodus] in the desert. And here remark a feature in this scene which distinguishes Christ from others who might seem to approach Him, at least circumstantially. Moses and Elijah fasted forty days; but Moses was sustained in God's presence; and Elijah was miraculously fed by an angel. It wasn't so with the Lord Jesus, who was in the presence of Satan, unlike the one, and was without any such previous sustenance as the other had enjoyed.

He could and did suffer, no doubt, from hunger, thirst, and weariness; but these things are in no way the index of nature, but of the circumstances through which humanity, holy or unholy, might pass. The holy person of Jesus did know these circumstances, and magnified God in them. Who will venture to affirm that Adam, if kept from food even in Eden, would not have suffered from hunger? The argument is worthless, save to betray the will to depreciate the Lord of glory.

To assert that the Lord Jesus was liable to sin is not only to deny His perfect humanity, but evinces, to say the least, the grossest ignorance of His person. He was tried and did suffer to the uttermost; but thence to infer or allow that He had such frailty and inwardly temptable nature as ours is, I must regard and denounce as a heinous libel on Christ, as a lie most destructive to man.

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 expiation for the sins of the people" (verse 17). The exclusion of sin in nature is added where it was requisite, when the apostle (Hebrews 4:15) states how fully He was tempted like us.

Observe, moreover, in Hebrews 2:18, "in that he himself hath suffered being tempted," there never was anything else: it is not that He suffered *after* being tempted, for this a man may do who yields and repents. **There was not, there could not be, distress of conscience in the Lord Jesus, any more than the workings of unbelief, such as we may feel.** He suffered in the entire moral being the sufferings of holiness and grace. He loathed and rejected all that the enemy presented to His holy nature. Hence He who in human nature knew trial and suffering beyond all is able to comfort the tried saint.

There was no sin in Adam and Eve when they were tempted. But let it be noticed that, when our first parents were tempted, there was no suffering then; they yielded. It is in contrast with the last Adam, who was incomparably more tempted but in nothing yielded. He met every assault by the word of God, instead of letting slip and transgressing it as they did. He came to do God's will, not His own.

In Him there was the absolute surrender of every thought and feeling to the will of God. There was but one apparent exception, where He prayed in His agony, "Let this cup pass from me." But how could He, who ever enjoyed the unbroken sunshine of God's favor throughout His career on earth, desire to be forsaken of God? It would have been indifference and not love, it would have been to despise the blessed fellowship between the Father and Himself. Therefore, was it a part of the perfectness of Christ to say, "Let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not my will but thine be done."

We may now glance at Hebrews 4:15: "For we have not an high priest unable to sympathize with our infirmities, but tempted as he hath been in all things alike apart from sin."

None assuredly should predicate of Christ what scripture does not; all on such a theme should beware what they draw from a text here or there, savoring of natural thoughts as to Him whom none knows save the Father.

Christ could be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, nay, was in all points tempted like as we are, sin excepted. The word "yet" interpolated into the Authorized Version, makes the sense equivocal, if it be not spoiled; at any rate, "yet" probably helped on the misinterpretation that the words teach no more than that He didn't yield to sin — that He was tempted, fully and like us, *yet* without sinning. But this is not the force.

He was tried in all things after a like sort (καθ' ὁμοίότητα) apart from sin (χωρίς ἁμαρτίας). Tempted as He was in all things similarly, in this He differed essentially that He had absolutely no sin in His nature. Consequently, we have inward temptations connected with sin in us, such as James speaks of, which *He* never had. The passage proves the precise contrary of this pernicious doctrine; for it qualifies the resemblance of His trials to ours by excepting sin. With sin He had nothing to do with in temptation, though He had all to do with it in suffering on the cross. He had not the smallest tendency to it in His humanity; though a partaker of blood and flesh, He had not what St. Paul calls "the flesh." There was *no* liability to sin in Him who was perfect God and perfect man in one person.

The liability to sin there would not be in a nature exclusively holy. Who would affirm such a liability of Christ when He comes again in glory? Now, the same expression - "without sin" (χωρίς ἁμαρτίας) - *is* employed about Him then (Hebrews 9:28) as when tempted here below (Hebrews 4:15). Without the smallest particle of sin or tendency to it in His humanity, He was assailed to the utmost by the devil; next, He was to put sin away by the sacrifice of Himself. The second time He will be seen apart from sin, having settled all the question and perfectly glorified God about it in the cross. He will come again, therefore, without sin for salvation.

Jesus must have proved the anguish of temptation here below; and so He did incomparably more than any other. In holy humanity He could feel sympathy with our infirmities, having felt the wiles and power and malice of the enemy, and so much more than we do, as His dignity and holiness and love transcended ours.

Never having known sin (which narrows and blunts the heart), but having suffered infinitely, His affections are free to go out to us, in our sore distresses as saints, who have the same outward enemy to try us.

The defiled soul is made to feel by the Spirit, and word of God, what his trifling with sin cost Christ, the Son of God, who bore the unsparing judgment of it all before God when made sin for him. Such is the doctrine of scripture, old and new; such is the holy way of God in actual experience.

This therefore is the needed and spiritual consolation:

“We haven’t an high priest who can’t be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, without sin.”¹

¹ Kelly, W. (2004). [*Christ Tempted and Sympathising*](#) (pp. 4–62). Galaxie Software.

A Compassionate Call to

Discipleship The Three Temptations of Jesus

#1 To Question God's Provision and Care 4:3-4	#2 To Questions God's Purposes and Plan 4:5-8	#3 To Question God's Power and Promises 4:9-13
You're Hungry...Make bread out of stones!	Worship Me...and get Your Kingdom Now!	Take the Plunge...and watch God rescue you
"Does God really love you?"	"Is God's will best for you?"	"Can you count on God's promises to you?"
"Shouldn't you find a way to meet your own needs when they're urgent?"	"Can you really trust God with your future?"	"Does it really matter if you do things God's way?"
Deuteronomy 8:3	Deuteronomy 6:13	Deuteronomy 6:16

Temptation of Jesus

We learn how to handle temptation:

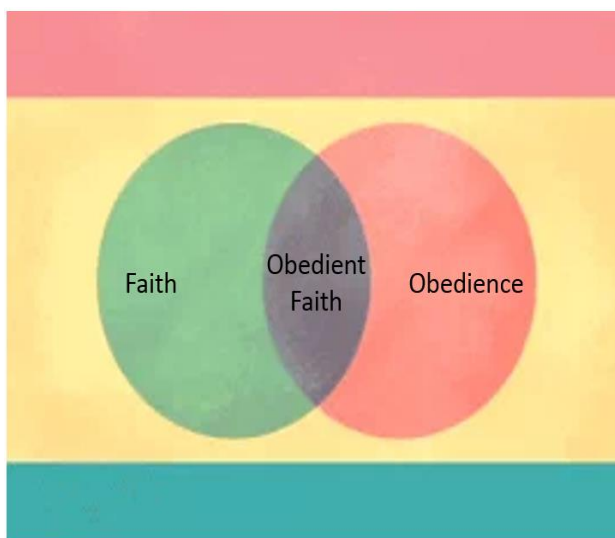
- Information = "It is written"
- Determination = "Get thee hence Satan"
- Dedication = "Him only shalt thou serve"

No degree of temptation justifies any degree of sin !

AT THE NEXUS OF GRACE & GLORY

Five Steps For Saving:

- HEARING:
- Romans 10: 17; Matthew 7: 24 - 27
- BELIEVING:
- Hebrews 11: 6; Mark 16: 15, 16
- REPENTING:
- Acts 2: 38; 17: 30; Luke 13: 3
- CONFESSING:
- Matthew 10: 32, 33; Acts 8: 36, 37
- BAPTISM:
- Romans 6: 3 – 5; Acts 8: 36 – 38



O That Will Be Glory

2. *Wh* O that will be glory for me, e grace,

I an Glory for me, glory for me; ce,

When by His grace I shall look on His face, e

That will be glory, be glory for me. me.

