

How Not To Enter Into Temptation

Mark 14:38 (NKJV)

³⁸Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

- “Watch and pray” – *These are two things that will keep us awake so that we will not enter into temptation.*
- “lest you enter into temptation” – *It is significant that this verse does not warn about falling into temptation but entering into temptation.*
- *Other places in Scripture warn about falling into temptation (e.g. 1 Timothy 6:9) but here the warning clearly speaks about entering into temptation.*
- *To fall into temptation implies more of a hidden trap that we fall into because we are unaware of it.*
- *Entering into temptation implies being aware of a trap but choosing to entertain it or at least not to flee from it.*
- *One of the reasons we may enter into temptation is because its enticement causes us to falsely reason that we can handle it.*

Hebrews 4:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵For 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.

- *Jesus was tempted in every way, even as we are, but without sin.*
- *The very concept of temptation entails with it the possibility of failure.*
- *Jesus was victorious in every way and His example is the one that we are to follow.*

Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV)

¹Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

²looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

- *The possibility of failure gives us additional insights into Christ’s suffering at Calvary.*

- *Jesus' failure would have resulted in not only the damnation of all of mankind but of Jesus Himself because even though He was the Son of God He came as the Son of Man.*
- *Through out Jesus' life and ministry He was tested, but there are two specific occasions found in Scripture that His consecration was fully tested.*
- *The first time was at the beginning of His earthly ministry and the second time at the conclusion of His earthly ministry.*

The first time was after Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist and was led into the wilderness for forty days.

Luke 4:13 (NKJV)

¹³Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.

- *“he departed from Him until an opportune time” - At the end of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness the Bible indicates there would be another time He would face the full onslaught of the devil's attack.*

The second time was at the final stage of His earthly ministry.

The second time Christ would experience the three temptations again but at an even greater intensity.

- *The first set of tests that Jesus encountered in the wilderness we will all have to face.*
- *But the second set of tests that Jesus experienced at Calvary are unique to Him as our Saviour and we will never have to experience those because He went through them for us so that we would not have to.*

1 John 2:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶For 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.

We will be tested in three areas:

The lust of the flesh

The lust of the eyes

The pride of life.

The First Test: The Lust of the Flesh

Luke 4:1-14 (NKJV)

1 Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

2 being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry.

“And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry”

Our faith can only be truly tested when we are in a wilderness.

Only when we are in need can we know how much we are truly trusting Christ.

3 And the devil said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.”

4 But Jesus answered him, saying, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.’ ”

Since the first temptation deals with the lust of the flesh it seems appropriate that this temptation deals with food.

What was the sin in turning the stones into bread?

- *One of the keys to understanding the root of this temptation is the phrase, “If You are the Son of God”.*

Matthew 7:9–11 (NKJV)

⁹Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?

¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent?

¹¹If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

- *The devil was saying, “If God is your Father then He must be more evil than the wicked men of this age since all He has provided for you are stones to eat.”*
- *It appeared Jesus needed some bread and fish but all He had was a bunch a stones and a serpent!*

But Jesus answered him, saying, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.’ ”

- *Jesus’ response gives us the solution to overcoming the lust of the flesh.*
- *The key to overcoming the lusts of the flesh is thankfulness and acknowledging God’s goodness.*
- *Jesus’ answer is. “My Father is so good that He supplies all my needs and beyond.”*

Many times we are unthankful with God’s provision because we are really lacking a revelation of God’s Word for our lives.

- *We need to believe that God is good and knows our needs and that He provides for them.*
- *We must recognize immediately when the devil is lying to us about the character of God and not even entertain those thoughts or we will soon find we have entered into temptation and fallen into unthankfulness.*

Romans 1:21–25 (NKJV)

²¹because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

²²Professing to be wise, they became fools,

²³and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

²⁴Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves,

²⁵who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

What is the solution to overcome the lust of the flesh? Thankfulness.

The difference between gluttony and enjoying a meal –Thankfulness.

The difference between enjoying sexuality within marriage and sexual perversion, unfaithfulness and immorality – Thankfulness.

The word devil means “slanderer, malicious gossip, accusing falsely” and comes from the root “to throw something between.”

How many times do we hear Christians say, “I am mad at God.”

They have been listening to the false reports of the devil against God and believed them.

The Lie: God is not good and He withholds good things from us.

We need to come to know God so well that we are confident in His goodness and faithfulness and we can confess His faithfulness no matter how difficult the situation is that we may find ourselves in.

- *This test is repeated at the end of Christ’s earthly ministry in Matthew 27:43-46*

Matthew 27:43 -46(NKJV)

⁴³He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’ ”

⁴⁴Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing.

- *The devil was using the voices of men to taunt Christ. If you are the Son of God and God is your Father then let Him rescue You now.*
- *The devil’s lie: “First your Father gave you stones when you needed bread and now He has given you a cross when you needed deliverance.”*

⁴⁵Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land.

⁴⁶And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

- *For three hours, darkness covered the land as Christ felt the separation from the Father, as the sin of all mankind was placed on Him as the Lamb of God.*
- *In the midst of Christ’s agony He called out and said, “My God I know that you are good and faithful. Why have you abandoned me?”*
- *God’s goodness is seen in that Christ was separated from the Father because of our sins so that for all eternity we can be joined to God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.*

The Second Test: The Lust of the Eyes

5 Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said to Him, “All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.

7 Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.”

8 And Jesus answered and said to him, “Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.’ ”

Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

This second temptation deals with the lust of the eyes.

The love of riches produces covetousness.

The first temptation, “God is not good and He is withholding good things from You.”

The second temptation of the devil is, “I am offering you all that you could ever want.”

Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

“in a moment of time” - The second temptation incorporates with it the idea that you can have it now.

The lie – “You neither have to wait for it nor do you have to prepare for it.”

There are no short cuts in God’s plan. What ever God does is complete, thorough, perfect and glorious.

Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.

The devil is a liar and what appears to be an invitation to receive glory is really a trap to bring us into bondage and destruction.

John 8:34 (NKJV)

³⁴Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.”

“Get behind Me, Satan”

Jesus is saying, “don’t stand in My way and get out of My line of sight for my vision is clearly on the Father and His plan.”

- *Once we begin to second-guess God’s plan we will be drawn away into self-effort and compromise.*

What is the solution to overcome the lust of the eyes? Contentment.

Jesus was content with all that God had planned for Him.

Philippians 4:11–13 (NKJV)

¹¹Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:

¹²I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

¹³I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

- *Paul was initiated into the mystery of being able to be joyful in all circumstances – to be fully content in Jesus Christ.*

Revelation 11:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”

- *In the end Jesus receives everything!*

What God is offering us is always the very best.

Satan appears to offer us the same things that God is offering us because what God is offering is the very best.

The only difference is what God is offering us He will really give us but Satan does the old bait and switch.

Satan offers us freedom and happiness but ends up giving us bondage and torment.

- *This test is repeated at the end of Christ’s earthly ministry in Matthew 16: 21-23*

Matthew 16:21–23 (NKJV)

²¹From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

²²Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, “Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!”

²³But He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”

All of Jesus’ disciples were waiting for Christ to overthrow the Romans and set up His kingdom.

When Jesus told His disciples what He would have to endure to fulfill the will of God, Peter’s response was, “Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!”

Peter was saying, “Bi-pass the cross and just set up your kingdom now. Don’t every talk about suffering and dying.”

“Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”

Jesus was facing the most horrible death and suffering and Satan through Peter was trying to get Him to bi-pass and take a short cut.

Christ was swift to command Satan to get behind Him and not to block His clear vision of the cross and the Father’s will, no matter how difficult it was.

Matthew 26:39 (NKJV)

³⁹He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”

Matthew 26:42 (NKJV)

⁴²Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.”

- *We can see in the Garden of Gethsemane the great travail of Christ’s soul as He wrestled with the reality of Calvary.*

- *If Jesus had not clearly rebuked Peter and rejected his words it would have left the door open for the temptation of compromise when He traveled in prayer at the Garden of Gethsemane.*

This was a real temptation as Jesus fully faced the horrors of Calvary.

Jesus was content with the Father's will no matter how much it would have to cost Him.

The Third Test: The Pride of Life

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9 Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here.

10 For it is written: ‘He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you,’

11 and, ‘In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.’ ”

12 And Jesus answered and said to him, “It has been said, ‘You shall not tempt the Lord your God.’ ”

What is the solution to overcome the pride of life? Humility and servanthood.

- “set Him on the pinnacle of the temple” - *Pride operates when we are visible to everyone.*

“If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here.”

It becomes all about us. Our sense of self-importance or self worth or recognition is what motivates us.

We believe the lie that we are so special to God that no matter how we act or what we do everything will work out just fine.

What would have happened if Jesus jumped off the temple?

He would have been killed.

Many of God's promises are conditional upon our response to Him and also are meant to bring glory to His name not to feed into our carnal attitudes.

“It has been said, ‘You shall not tempt the Lord your God.’ ”

Christ clearly understood the Word of God and put it in the proper context with the proper application.

- *This test is repeated at the end of Christ’s earthly ministry in Mark 15:29-32.*

Mark 15:29–32 (NKJV)

²⁹And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, “Aha! You who destroy the temple and build it in three days,
³⁰save Yourself, and come down from the cross!”

³¹Likewise the chief priests also, mocking among themselves with the scribes, said, “He saved others; Himself He cannot save.

³²Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe.” Even those who were crucified with Him reviled Him.

“Aha! You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself, and come down from the cross!”

The passersby, the religious leaders, and even those being crucified were all mocking Jesus.

“He saved others; Himself He cannot save. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe.”

As they were mocking Him they were saying, “come down from the cross and we will believe in You and You can be our king.”

Jesus was on the cross not for His sake but ours.

The cross of Calvary is a true picture of humility and servanthood.

Matthew 26:52–54 (NKJV)

⁵²But Jesus said to him, “Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.

⁵³Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?

⁵⁴How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?”

Jesus had the authority and power to save Himself.

But in the process it would have left all mankind destined to damnation.

13 Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.

14 Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region.

Christ's consecration empowered Him to return from the time of testing in wilderness to proclaim the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Christ's consecration empowered Him to go through Calvary and overcome sin, the devil and the world to redeem us in order that we may become the sons and daughters of God.

When we have passed through the temptations of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life we then are able to have Christ live through us and see God's will done on earth as it is done in Heaven.

- *Some here have never received Christ as Saviour and Lord and have been ruled all their lives by the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life and have tasted the bitter fruit of these things but today is an opportunity to come to Christ and be saved and walk the path to freedom and true happiness.*
- *Some here have received Christ but are still struggling in one or more of these areas and today we have an opportunity to seek God for His grace and strength to walk with Him through the process of freedom.*
- *Some here have experienced areas of victory and we can give thanks and seek Him so that our entire lives will be consecrated for His glory.*

