Foundations For Your Faith  Lesson 16
The Temptation of Christ  Matt. 4:1-11

Read Matt. 4:1-11 carefully, several times, and then answer the following questions from the verses as noted.

vs. 1  Who led Jesus into this situation?  Why?

Who was Jesus tempted?

vs. 2  Describe Jesus’ physical condition at the time of the temptations and how it might have contributed to each temptation?

vs. 3-4  What was the main point of temptation #1?

Did Jesus overcome it?  How?

Could He have sinned?
Was He really tempted?
How did He battle the temptations?

vs. 5-7  What was the main point of temptation #2?

Does the Devil know the word of God?
Did He quote it properly?  (See Ps. 91:11 & Gen. 3)

Why didn’t Jesus jump?
Wouldn’t it have demonstrated great faith?
Did He doubt God?
What’s the difference between trusting & testing God?

vs. 8-10  What was the main point of temptation #3?

What was Satan offering to Jesus?
What did He show Christ?  (Be specific)
How would you compare Christ’s 3 temptations with Eve’s in Gen. 3?
How were Jesus’ temptations different from ours?

What areas of life are we tempted in according to 1 John 2:15-17?

1
2
3

Memorize I Cor. 10:13, James 4:7, and I John 4:4
Quiz on Lesson 16 NIV      Foundations for Your Faith
Matt.4:1-11   The Temptation of Jesus Christ

1. Two reasons for the temptation of Christ?

2. Could Christ have sinned? (What word defines this fact?)

3. What book did Jesus quote from in the temptations?

4. Jesus, as a ____ could be tempted, but as ______ He could not sin.
   But He resisted these genuine temptations as a ________.

5. Trusting or Tempting?
   Doing our own thing with no command from God is __________ God.
   Obeying God’s clear command is __________ God.

6. Who tempts us? _______________    Who tests us?___________________

7. Was the situation in the garden with Adam and Eve a test or a temptation?
   How about Job?

8. What word is being defined below?
   “A God given, legitimate drive or desire, twisted and satisfied outside the
   boundaries of God’s will.” __________

9. Christ was tempted by attacks from outside, we are often tempted because of our
   sinful natures from ________________.

10. What means has God provided with which we can overcome the Tempter?

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**Teacher’s Guide - Foundations For Your Faith - Lesson 16 NIV**

**The Temptation of Christ** Matt. 4:1-11 (Christology)

Background: Christ’s baptism; public identification with John’s message; recognition by John as Messiah; time of testing by Satan

**Thought Question**
- What is the difference between temptation and testing?
  - **Temptation** is a solicitation to do evil. It comes from the flesh or the devil. Not God. See James 1:13-16
  - **Testing** comes from God – it is an opportunity to show faithfulness and obedience. To prove your worth. A teacher gives you a test to allow you to prove what you have learned. Your flesh tempts you to cheat and look on someone else’s paper.
- **JOB** – was he tested or tempted? Was is God or Satan at work? YES!!!
  - God allowed Job to be tested to demonstrate his faithfulness. Satan worked to tempt Job to turn his back on God.
  - Both Stan and God are in your struggles and troubles. God allows them for your testing. Satan provides bait for your temptation.
- Every test includes a temptation.
- Every temptation provides a test.

- (vs.2) "hungry" = starved; 40 days of fasting; nearly at point of no return – would need angelic assistance to survive this great testing
- (vs.3) "If thou be" = (ean w/ subjunctive = assumed reality) “since you are...” See Col. 3:1 for the same grammatical construction

**vs.1** Who led Jesus into this temptation situation? The Holy Spirit

**Why was Jesus tempted?**
1) To show that He was human as well as divine – able to be tempted
2) To demonstrate Christ’s power over Satan - to overcome the tempter
3) *To comfort the saints that Satan is not invincible*; he can be defeated Heb. 2:18; 4:15

4) *To cause Christ to experience great temptation* so He can be merciful and sympathetic as our helper in our temptations

5) *To give us comfort*, being assuring our Savior knows and understands, by experience, human temptations and painful battles

6) *To demonstrate for us the means* by which Satan can be defeated—how to effectively use the Word of God in our daily temptations

**vs. 2** Describe Jesus’ physical condition at the time of the temptations and how it might have contributed to each temptation?

He had fasted forty days and forty nights. He was at the point of no return; He was at the brink of starvation and would require angelic assistance to recover. He did not eat anything.

- **Adam & Eve were at their best and strongest; Jesus was at His worst and weakest.**
  The Devil used his most ingenious efforts to bring down the Son of God. These were the most deceitful temptations that could possibly be brought to bear. Christ’s victory proved that He was sinless as our second Adam. (Heb. 4:14-16)

**How does this relate to each of the temptations?**

1) *To rush God’s timing.* He was no doubt hungry; satisfy your hunger with bread. If He did not eat soon, He would die. If God is your Father and you are His Son, He will not want you to be hungry. You can do this yourself, you do not need your Father. Duet. 8:3

2) *To be confused by misinterpretation of Scripture.* Test instead of trust. Presumption on the promises of the Father; tempting God to prove His care and provision for His Son. Psa. 91:11-12; Duet. 6:16 There was the power of suggestion as well as the corruption of Scripture here. Get God to get some angels to deliver you from this miserable situation. Force God’s hand. You need angelic help, so go get it for yourself now!

3) Shortcuts to the crown. To attempt to get power and glory for ourselves. Stop being stuck in this powerless position in the desert. Take matters into your own hands. If the crown is the ultimate goal, then why bother with the cross. It’s about you getting the crown, not saving stupid, ungrateful, weak humans. Here’s the perfect solution. (God and God alone is to be worshipped; not to change God’s plan in any way by passing the cross; Duet. 6:13.

**vs. 3-4** What was the main point of temptation #1? (See 1 John 2:16)

The desire to eat. God made food. God made you to eat it!

Food is necessary. If Jesus is going to the cross, He must start eating at some point.

- **Why wait?** (*Waiting seems to be the point of all three temptations!*)

**The lust of the flesh.** 1 John 2:16

Food, drink, sleep, sex, success; the drives of the flesh. They are God given, but now we have corrupted all of these.

(Lust = Desire; Drive, a compelling desire)

*This Greek word can be used for a good or evil desire – it simply means “a strong desire” – used in 1 Tim. 3:1 for a good desire*
Galatians - “The Spirit lusteth against the flesh.......
Modern English word lust connotes evil desire

- Did Jesus overcome it? Yes
Duet. 8:3 (Luther - “One little word shall fell him.”)

The Word of God is the weapon of God for our defense.
We must know this weapon well, and learn to use it effectively. It is totally sufficient.

- Could He have sinned? No – He is God
- Was He really tempted? Yes – He is human
- How did He battle the temptations? As a man

The temptation was real because it was dealt with as a man; as God He could not sin or be tempted. God cannot be tempted and God cannot sin. The fact that He was tempted had to do with His human nature. He was tempted because He was human; He could not sin because He was divine.

- KEY TRUTH: He dealt with the temptation purely as a man. (The Devil said, "since you
are the Son of God;" and Jesus said, "it is written, MAN.........”
He could have said, "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man." But He didn’t!

Those who say Jesus could have sinned but did not and those who say He could not have sinned both agree that:
1. that He could not be tempted in His deity,
2. that He was tempted because He was a man,
3. that He resisted the temptation as a man
4. that He did not sin,
5. that He cannot ever sin now.
If He can not sin now, then why could He then? He is still a man!
When did He change in His capacity?
And if just because He is human then He could sin, then why can't we sin in eternity?
1. Could He have sinned before He was a man? No!
2. Then did His incarnation make Him less than He was? No!
3. How did He deal with the temptations - as God or as a man in submission to the Father?
He dealt with it purely as a man! His temptations were externally real.
But there was no evil within Him, internally, to which these temptations could appeal.
He never experienced any conflicting inner sinful longings.
He was completely sinless in His human nature and He was committed to His Father's will and His divine will supported His human will in this commitment. He wanted to please the Father.

vs. 5-7 What was the main point of temptation #2?
(1 John 2:16) Lust of the eyes.
To cast Himself off the temple and have the angels rescue Him immediately.
The temptation to misapply scripture and force God’s hand to provide angelic help.
• Does the Devil know the word of God? Yes!
• Did He quote it properly? (See Ps. 91:11 & Gen. 3) No!
"You may not eat of any tree..... you will not die." Genesis 3

Compare what he said with Ps. 91:11. "He left out "in all thy ways"
Jesus said, "My will is to do the will of Him that sent me."

It had to be the way of the cross.
The way of the Father and the way of the Son was the way of the cross. None of these temptations was the way of the cross.
If we go out of our way, out of the way of our duty, we forfeit the promise and put ourselves out of God's protection.

• It looks like the Devil is advocating "Faith" Cast yourself down.......... 
Faith is God enabling me to do His will!
The will of God for the believer is revealed in His commands!
If I am going to live by faith, it means that I am going to follow the commands.
There is no command in the Bible to jump off pinnacles!
The Devil was tempting Jesus to take matters into His own hands, jump, and force the Father's hand to send angels to rescue Him. It was self centered!
The Father would send angels at the right time. For now, He had to wait!

• Why didn't Jesus jump? There was no command.
Wouldn't God have kept His word?
This was not what God meant in Psalm 91:11.
If Jesus was not in the way of the Father, there was no promise to keep Him.
God shall supply all my "needs"........ Not my wants, desires, stupid ways I go in.........

• Did Jesus doubt God or His promise? Certainly not!

• Wouldn’t it have demonstrated great faith? No!

Let’s define “faith”
What’s the counterfeit of faith? Presumption!
What’s the difference between faith and presumption? Obedience to clear commands.
Does it take faith to not lock your doors? Or does it take naiveté?
Any divine command: thou shalt not lock thy doors?
Then it isn’t “faith” to leave them unlocked.

What's the difference between TRUSTING and TESTING?
• Trusting = Obeying God's clear commands. God’s will and glory is at the center.
• Testing = Doing my own will when there is no command associated with it..
          Expecting God to take up the slack. Self will and self glory is at the center.

Warren Wiersbe  "Faith is not believing in spite of the evidence, it is obeying in spite of the consequence."
vs. 8-10 What was the main point of temptation #3? (1 John 2:16)
- **What was Satan offering to Jesus?**
  An immediate crown
  A crossless crown (The crown without the cross)
  *The kingdoms of this world did not belong to the Devil. He is a liar!*  
  *Satan reigns over the hearts of men, but he does not own them. God is still God!*
- **What did He show Christ? (Be specific)**
  The kingdoms of the world and their splendor - not their evils!
- **What did he show Christ?**  Maybe the actual land; Maybe a superimposed,.  Certainly the power and glory and splendor of them. Christ had great power and splendor in heaven, now he is starving in the desert, with the cross being the only thing to look forward to. If God the Father meant for Christ to have the kingdoms, why wait?

- **How would you compare Christ’s 3 temptations with Eve’s in Gen. 3?**
  1. The tree was good for food - the lust of the flesh
  2. Pleasant to the eyes - the lust of the eyes
  3. A tree to be desired to make one wise - the arrogance of life.
  *The same temptations, just suited for the Son of God.*

- **How did His temptations differ from some of ours?**
  *Our temptations are from within; His are from without.*
  James 1:14 - "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."
  The bait is put out, but it is our hunger that is the problem.
  We have the Holy Spirit that gives us the power to overcome these temptations.
  He uses the Sword of the Spirit to enable us to overcome.
  In Gen. 3 we see the process of temptation:
  1) Eve thought about it (thought)
  2) She justified it. (justification & excuse)
  It is good for food. God never said it was good for food. A tree desired to make one wise.

- **What areas of life are we tempted in according to 1 John 2:15-17?**
  1 Desires of the flesh – bodily desires & drives
  2 Desires of the eyes – wanting what we see - coveting
  3 Arrogance of life – wanting power, position, control, significance

Key to this passage: God calls us to a life of obedient trust in His clear commands.
  The scripture gives us commands, counsel, direction, and strength.
  "If we falter, He abideth faithful." We have an advocate, and intercessor, a fortifier of our faith, a companion and helper, and a powerful weapon.
Memorize I Cor. 10:13, James 4:7, and I John 4:4