



When Temptation Comes

By Jeff Bedwell on January 7, 2021

READING: Luke 4

Jesus was "full of the Holy Spirit" as He began his public ministry. This did not prevent Him from experiencing temptation - a good reminder that we too can be in the center of God's will and full of the Holy Spirit, but still be subject to temptation. Temptation itself is not a sin.

The essence of temptation here for Jesus, and so often for us, is to fulfill a legitimate need in an illegitimate way - to act independently of God. Satan tried to get Jesus to question the Father's love (why has He left you hungry?), the Father's plan (there is another way to have the kingdom without the suffering), and the Father's faithfulness (if God is so faithful, prove it!). Satan even misused and twisted scripture to entice Jesus into sin. We too can rationalize and justify our disobedience even at times misusing or twisting scripture to fit our purposes outside of the purposes of God.

We must be aware of the patterns of the enemy's temptations. The patterns are the same even if the specific applications are different in each of our lives in different seasons of our lives.

We must also employ the means that God has given us to battle temptation. Chief among these is being saturated in the Word of God through the continual practice of hearing, reading, studying, memorizing, and meditating upon God's Word. As we face the reality of continual temptation in a fallen world, we can rest in the reality that we never battle alone (see 1 Corinthians 10:13 and Hebrews 4:14-16). Like Jesus, God's Holy Spirit is with us, empowering our obedience and guiding our steps.

PRAYER: "Father, Jesus taught us to 'Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak' (Matthew 26:41). Help me engage in the daily battle against temptation -- confident of the forgiveness and intercession of Jesus Christ, armed with prayer, the truth of Your Word and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit."

TOMORROW'S READING: Luke 5

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