

THE GOOD & BAD OF TEMPTATION

Matthew 4:1-11

THE GOOD TEST (THE REFINING OF CHARACTER)

1. **THE SPIRIT IS CRITICAL**

That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God. 9 But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. Romans 8:8-9 (NLT)

2. **THE TESTING IS ESSENTIAL**

Judges 2:21-22

I the LORD search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds Jeremiah 17:10 (ESV)

3. **THE DEVIL IS REAL**

Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. 1Peter 5:8 (NLT)

4. **THE WORD IS VITAL**

I have stored up your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Psalm 119:11 (ESV)

5. **THE BATTLE IS WINNABLE**

No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he'll never let you be pushed past your limit; he'll always be there to help you come through it. 1Corinthians 10:13 (MSG)

6. **THE CHOICE IS SIMPLE**

For wherever there is ... selfish ambition, there you will find ...evil of every kind. But wisdom from above is...peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. Full of mercy and good deeds."James 3:16-17 (NLT)

MY WILL OR GOD'S WILL

7. **THE TEMPLATE IS JESUS**

Because He himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested. Hebrews 2:18 (NRSV)

Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did. 1John 2:6 (NLT)

THE BAD TEMPTATION

(THE ENTICEMENT OF EVIL)

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. 14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death James 1:13-15 (ESV)

Genesis 50:20

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. Genesis 3:6 (NKJV)

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. 1John 2:16 NKJV)

A. DOUBT GOD'S PROVISION

And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." 4 But he answered, "It is written, " 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' " Matthew 4:2-4 (ESV)

Jesus ... my nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing his work. John 4:34 (NLT) (see John 4:31-34)

B. TEST GOD'S PROTECTION

Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple 6 and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, " 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and " 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.' " 7 Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.' " Matthew 4:5-7 (ESV)

C. ALTER GOD'S PLAN

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, " 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.' " 11 Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him. Matthew 4:8-11 (ESV)

Matthew 16:22-23 (NLT)

Now that we know what we have—Jesus, this great High Priest with ready access to God—let's not let it slip through our fingers. ¹⁵ We don't have a priest who is out of touch with our reality. He's been through weakness and testing, experienced it all—all but the sin. ¹⁶ So let's walk right up to him and get what he is so ready to give. Take the mercy, accept the help.
Hebrews 4:14-16 (MSG)

My Next Step

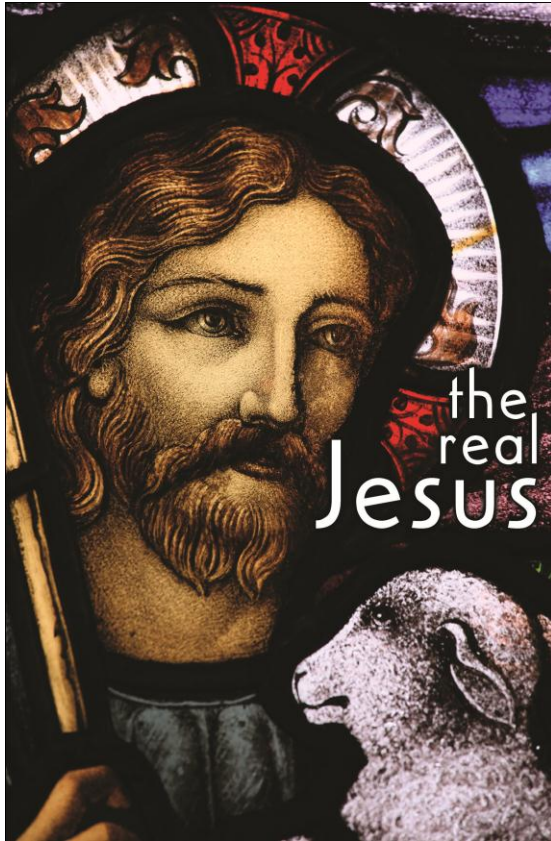
- Memorize: **Hebrews 2:18**
- Accept that trials/test only come to make me stronger
- Realize the temptation battle is winnable through Christ
- Invite someone to come celebrate The Real Jesus with me on Christmas Eve @ 4 or 6 p.m.

WALK THE TALK

Growth Group Resource

1. How does knowing that Jesus was tempted like us help you appreciate the season of Christmas more?
2. Review the seven points under "The Good Test." Pick the top two that help you the most when you find yourself being tempted. Explain why you picked them.
3. When being tempted why is it so important to "own it" instead of blame the devil for everything? How does James 1:13-15 help us face this reality about temptation?
4. Under the section "Bad Temptation," which of the three temptations that Jesus faced seems to be the toughest to win? Why?
5. Re-read Hebrews 4:14-16: What is your favorite part of this passage? Why?

Create a Christmas tradition around the real Jesus with your family this Christmas season. Perhaps use this sermon series to talk with your spouse or children about the “real reason for the season.” (Examples: Use each week to build toward Christmas morning by using the Advent Wreath. OR, Hang a new Christmas ornament on the tree that celebrates in some real way the true meaning of Christmas)



The Tempted Jesus

The Real Jesus – Part 2

**A Sermon Resource Guide
On the Incarnation**

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