

Tempted As We Are (Part II)
Short Term Gratification vs. Eternal Satisfaction
 Luke 4:5-8

The premise of our study on the temptations of Christ is that “we have high priest who can sympathize with us, for He has been **tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin...**” (Heb. 4:15). Sin by its nature is destructive. Last time we saw how Satan tempts us to use our power and abilities for self-gratification.

Jesus is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. When He came to earth, He came as the Anointed One. How kingly do you think Jesus felt during His forty days and nights of fasting in the wilderness? He was alone, tired, dirty, hungry, and thirsty. *Being King over the eternal kingdom must have seemed a long way off.* The devil came to Jesus and tempted him “*Let me show you how you can have **now** what you deserve.*” He took Jesus to a high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.¹¹⁵

Before we look specifically at this temptation, there’s a side note for all of us to consider. Some believe the devil was lying about being able to give the kingdoms to Jesus. We know that God ultimately rules over all things (Psalm 103:19), and that the devil is a liar (John 8:44), but Jesus doesn’t contradict Satan.

(A). What we see happening in the Middle East with ISIS seems to be instigated by Satan himself.

(B). It is impossible for Satan to do anything without ultimate *permission* from God.

Something greater is coming. God’s eternal good arises out of the temporal wickedness of man.

“Surely your wrath against man brings you praise, and the survivors are restrained” (Ps. 76:10).

I. Short-term gratification *feels right* to the person being tempted.

There are several things to note about Jesus condition as he was being tempted by Satan.

Jesus was deprived (tired and hungry) and **Satan offered Him splendor** (no more suffering).

Jesus was alone with the wild animals and **Satan offered Him significance** (no more obscurity).

Jesus knew good was coming later, but **Satan offered Him immediate gratification for Himself.**

Here’s what the devil seems to be saying: “Been a carpenter’s son, huh? Look, I’ll give you the world and you may do with it as you wish. You’re a king, aren’t you? Inaugurate the kingdom of God on earth, if that’s what you want to do. Free Israel from Roman rule. Establish justice in the world. Care for the poor. Usher in world peace. Wouldn’t that please the Father? Do it now! Sounds good, right?”

II. Some of the strongest temptations in your life come when you are deprived and alone.

This is true in terms of your relationships, your job, your career, your family, your very life. The devil will come to me and convince me that ‘just a little pleasure now’ is okay, particularly because God wants me to be happy, and right I’m miserable. There is just one catch to this common temptation. The devil says, “If you will bow down and worship me.” I must be the one on whom you depend.

III. The real worship of God is seen in doing what God’s commands and trusting in God’s providence.

Jesus responds to this temptation by saying that God alone is worthy of our worship. Of course!

(A). Be careful that you don’t measure God’s love by your outward circumstances.

Jesus never tested the Father’s love by demanding that it be shown to Him in a certain way

(B). Realize that sometimes the most dangerous sins are disguised in feel good wrapping.

“Satan seeks to trap God’s servants into doing evil, thinking it to be good... .” J.I. Packer.

(C). Ultimately the lesson of this temptation is that we cannot serve two masters.

As Jesus said, we will hate one and love the other (Matthew 6:24). Anyone or anything that rivals God for our worship demands our service also. This would include people, things, or reputation.