

Temptation

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Preacher: Daniel Chapallaz

[0:00] Let me bring you guys back together. What does the world think about temptation? Any thoughts?

! I think the world loves temptation. Explain more.

I think it's a challenge. Sometimes it's an achievement. Definitely. Just to help us with that, just to back our seminar up a bit, I found a couple of adverts. Milkshake, team-tempting to take a... temptation. Sort of displayed as a very attractive thing, isn't it?

Yeah? I'm not sure that it's always recognized. Can you repeat that? I can't hear you. I think it is, though. It's a challenge.

It's a challenge. It's a challenge. It's a challenge. It's just not good. It's a challenge. It's just not good. It's a challenge. No, I was just thinking that maybe details aren't really recognized as temptation.

[1:35] It's just sort of, you know, not a problem, really. Yeah. Yeah. That's how you feel. So, yeah. Yeah. Just do what you feel and, you know, it's not... you don't have to resist anything.

Yeah. And I think people like to. Yeah. I think the world likes to burn in it. It's... everyone's votes and everyone has to take a... maybe the topic or anything.

And I can see... we are very comfortable. Yeah. So it does it. Yeah. Uh... Valerie or Shekona, who's going best?

She's going best. Who's more tempted to go best? Yeah. I don't know. Yeah. I think the world definitely looks at temptation as something that's attractive and something that's good.

And I think a big reason for that would also be it feeds into the idea that we can do things without consequences and that things have no... there's no objective right and wrong, but that you can just do what you want and there's just nothing that's going to be done about it.

[2:51] Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Exactly. And we also thought that it may still seem as though people are victims of temptation. So oftentimes when you're looking in the media about people that are living against sin, you're always meant to be individuals and characters.

So you have like... you're probably with sitcoms like Modern Family or whatever it is, where people that are living in the base, immorality, other characters that are meant to be likeable. So not only do they make it seem as though people cannot resist temptation.

And I guess it's just to be they can't, right? They don't have the spirit. But the way it seems as though even for the people that are falling into things like adultery, that sort of thing, like all of you, like I said, they just gave... it was being felt as if they just couldn't do anything.

Yeah. So it means it feels like that... Yeah. That's interesting how all of my portrayals... Great portrayal. I think it's really difficult for generalists, because there's lots of people that feel, for instance, that still is wrong.

Yeah. So they may not be Christians, but otherwise we wouldn't have any law, would we? Yeah.

[4:10] Yeah. So I think sometimes we can be a bit too judgmental on non-Christians. Because, I don't know, my eldest grandson is tempted to stay in bed, not go to school until he arrives by my doorstep and says, I'm late, but his mother and father were ever saying to him, you know, it's wrong, you can't leave.

So they're not to celebrate and just stay in bed. So... Yeah. It's a bit of a bit of a bit of a minus.

Yeah. That's a barrier, isn't it?

Thank you. I think when you say that's true, but even when it comes to stealing, I think there's no rebranding of what stealing is. I think you think a lot about things like retribution or reparation, when

countries are like, okay, this country owes us this amount of money that they haven't allowed for, or even when you have things like the struggle between tax and the one-half rate, or even when the government tax people would be not what's actually appropriate to the services that they're providing.

We're in as much as we might all the university say that stealing is wrong, but there's actually a lot of stealing that goes above the day-to-day stream. I think it's both that, like, yeah, there are definitely people that say, absolutely stealing is wrong, we're not gonna do it as much as well. We might be tempted, and there's others that are just stealing from people without even thinking. Particularly the more powerful people are, probably.

[6:06] What's that? Interesting. I don't want us to dwell on it too long. We want to get a scripture. I think, you know, truths and what everyone has said, I think, I've seen through the scripture, I think, in Romans where it talks about the Lord being written on the heart.

Yeah. And as a result of the form of man, the conscience isn't so seared to the extent that there's not a remnant of the Lord. The Lord is written on the hearts of all human beings by virtue of being against the Lord which you've got.

So there is always some non-procability. I think one of the things we were talking about is, even people, they have a moral law, and they know right and wrong to a degree, that they'll go as far as to say they don't want to be into that temptation because it's harmful to them.

Possibly what's harmful to others. Think about alcohol, drug dependence. People are conscious, conscious that they relax back into that. It's gonna be harmful. I guess what the unbeliever doesn't think about is, it must come to that temptation.

It not only harms me and my neighbour, but it's harmful to my personal relationship with God. Yeah. So the unbeliever doesn't have a good feeling? Well, they're raising an old cottage and they're accountable to God.

[7:23] Yeah. They're accountable to God. They're knowledgeable to that or conscious of that. Yeah. And they might just suppress that knowledge.

Yeah. Interesting. Can temptation be attractive? I think Corinne's got something to say on this. I've heard of this. It's a good level.

It's a good level. Well, as you said, I don't know. It's quite like, it's a good thing that way. Like we're all moths. Yes.

It's kind of... Attractive to them. ...light in... Yeah. Yeah. It can feel attractive. It has power, doesn't it? Temptation.

Yeah. And but Jesus experienced temptation and that's good news for us. How do people react to that? People are nodding their heads.

[8:21] That's good. That's good. Yeah. It's true. You don't want to see. Oh, you can do. I was just like, yay, people agree.

The fact that Jesus was tempted, that is good for us. And even better was the fact that he resisted the temptation by quoting scriptures.

Yeah. Yeah. So we need to learn our scriptures. We do, don't we? So while we're faced with temptation, and the Lord just said that with every temptation there's a way...

There's a way out. Yeah. Yeah. This is good. We're doing well. Shall we read Matthew 4? Let's turn to scripture. Let's turn to scripture. Let's turn to scripture.

Matthew 4, and I'll read from verse 1. Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

[9:41] After fasting for 40 days and 40 nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, if you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.

Jesus answered, it is written, man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the highest point of the temple.

If you are the Son of God, he said, throw yourself down, for it is written. He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against the stone.

Jesus answered, him it is also written, do you not put the Lord your God to the test? Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. All this I will give you, he says, if you will bow down and worship me. Jesus said to him, away from me, Satan, for it is written, worship the Lord your God and serve him only.

[10:51] And the devil left him, and angels came and attended him. Let's ask for God's help as we look at this passage for a moment.

Father God, as we've already begun discussing, temptation is real. Our world may often paint it as an attractive thing, or not something to worry about.

For ourselves, it can feel attractive. We can feel the power that it has. We can be like those moths going to the bright lights. Father, we thank you that in your word, we see our savior who experienced the full force of temptation.

And we thank you that's good news for us. And we pray that we'd see more of that and be helped in the temptations that we may face. And we ask this in Jesus name. Amen.

In this passage, we're seeing Jesus's weakness.

[12:07] Jesus's weakness. What do I mean by that? Verses one and two again. Then Jesus was led by the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

After fasting for 40 days and 40 nights, he was hungry. He was hungry. 40 days and 40 nights. Jesus had been in the wilderness. It was hot. He was hungry, desperately hungry. Imagine going 40 days without food. How starving you would be.

And so Jesus in his humanity was feeling weakness. And longing to be filled with nourishing foods. To help his tiredness and his low energy. Why do you think 40 days and 40 nights was the period that he was there?

[13:13] Why 40 days and 40 nights? Anyone got some suggestions? Exodus. Exodus. Tell me more. Yeah, the Israelites in the wilderness. Yeah.

David. David. His friends must go a limit to how much you have fast as well. Yeah. Yeah. I think it said about 40 days is about as long as we could go without food as we need to do.

God knows that. He was watered. He was watered. He was watered. He was watered. He was a human being. He'd be dead if he didn't have water. The number 40 symbolizes confusion. Yeah. It's used many times and many concepts. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. It is used in many time, many places in the Bible.

And Mike was saying about period of completion. Any other thoughts about 40 in the Bible? Any other experiences you can think of?

[14:17] Yeah. You said to share that he was in a magazine that he was free of water. He was a human being. He was running a home. No feeling you should be able to go that way. He said to him to the people.

You know that? Yeah. Without water. Without water. Okay. They can't hear. They can't hear. Yeah. We were just talking about how much there is that research that had been had in the time.

Yeah. He managed it. I think most of us would struggle. We might make it, but we'd struggle, wouldn't we? um yeah um yes 40 that's what i thought as well yeah um yeah it rained for 40 days and 40 nights yeah i think i particularly it's about times of testing and um trials so the 40 days and 40 nights of flood uh waters uh the 40 years in the wilderness was a long 40 years um goliath taunted israel's army for 40 days um elijah fled from jezebel and traveled 40 days and 40 nights um and there could there are other a bit more tenuous links that we could think about in the bible as well um it is literally just 40 days but there does seem to be um that special biblical significance of it and the question is as we read this um passage as we're seeing at the beginning jesus's utter weakness would he stand the test it's an important question to ask ourselves would jesus fully man fully god would he stand the test would the one who claims to be the sinless lamb of god the one who would give up his life for us on the cross would he stand the test of trial of temptation or would in his humanity succumb to the temptations that he's faced um want to think specifically firstly about the temptations that the devil confronts him with here um first of all appeals to um trying to be satisfied um let me explain more verse three the tempter came to him and said if you are the son of god tell these stones to become breads devil knowing jesus is so hungry says look here's some stones you're the son of god you have all power and might just turn them into some bread to satisfy your rumbling tummy tummy and he's god we can't do that though he's trying to fill the full force of

human temptation and temptations often come our way that appeal to our satisfaction where we have temptations um to be satisfied with with intimacy or love or acceptance or to um whatever it may be um they're like stones then they're not really gonna satisfy us imagine having a plate of stones for your dinner that's that's gonna be difficult to get into isn't it it's not really warm bread and that's what many of our temptations are like they're looking like wonderful warm bread but they're actually stones they're not gonna satisfy us so for example we we know sleep is good and god given so someone mentioned uh being tempted to sleep in um be lazy sleep is good and we need it it reminds us we're not the creator but perhaps we're tempted to hit that snooze alarm in the morning knowing that we're going to cut short our quiet times or not even have them at all with god and the day will be awful perhaps that's a temptation or perhaps we we just desire the good food that the lord provides and we know it is good it's good he gives us good food but then we're tempted to eat to far too much excess i know i'm tempted with this well if i've got an evening where i'm alone i i want to um eat a whole packet of biscuits or cookies or something and i know it's not going to satisfy me i know i'm going to feel rubbish at the end i'm glad you understand thank you for the sympathy other temptation perhaps we might covet something else that somebody else has desire their job their reputation at church everyone looks to them wants to talk to them why not me desire their relationship we desire what they have and see it as the bread that's going to satisfy whereas actually it would be the stones that will disappoint us our world is filled with many um longings to satisfy sexual desires as well isn't it and perhaps we're tempted towards things like looking at images or videos on on line thinking that that's going to be the bread that will satisfy us but it's just empty stones that are going to leave us disappointed and that's a a real problem facing um not just us but even children and young people growing up with access so easily to devices how we need to pray for our young people those temptations that they're going to face and probably probably are facing temptation to satisfy um here for jesus his hunger a temptation for popularity to popularity really without suffering look at verses five to six then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the highest point of the temple if you are the son of god he said throw yourself down for it's written he'll command his angels concerning you and they will lift you up in their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone god rightly is to be glorified and jesus here is being tempted as perfect god and perfect man and he knows the task that he has before him the task his father has set to to die for us and then the glory will come but the devil is like well if you throw yourself down the armies of angels will lift you up and not only uh you'll throw yourself down but but throw yourself from the highest point of the temple why the temple that's where god is worshiped isn't it and if people who are coming to worship god see jesus jumping off the temple and an angel army comes to raise him up they'll be flocking to him he'll be the talk of the town people will follow him and bow down and worship him it's a really strong temptation i'm sure for the son of god and you can do that without suffering death on the cross it's a shortcut to popularity and we ourselves may feel this temptation of wanting to be recognized wanting to be light wanting to be followed by many people on social media wanting a name for ourselves and that desire can grow into temptation a silly example but one that i thought of this week we we wouldn't go and tell people we're going to lie down on wired up roads and don't worry everyone because god will protect me so we'll stream it online and gather a crowd it would be silly we might make it to the front page of the argos for being an absolute fool but it's not gonna prove anything maybe as a um a christian we we could be tempted by some sort of false gospel some sort of prosperity gospel that says the christian life doesn't involve suffering give us lots of your money and god will give you great wealth and health god wants you to prosper at life here don't forget about the suffering it's an attractive message but but jesus he doesn't give in to this temptation he knows the father's plan we'll get get to that a little bit more in a moment temptation to popularity and finally temptation to power or success yes the devil tempts him further verse 8 again the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor all this i will give you he said if you will bow down and worship me temptation to power you can have it all jesus and you can have it all again without the suffering the catch is you've got to worship we ourselves could be tempted to quick sort of power or success but perhaps we're desperately looking for for work and we know some within our church are perhaps there's there could be the temptation to say just a little lie on our cv or in an interview so that we'd get the job so that we'd have that success temptation or perhaps um some of us uh work and maybe we work from home at times we're tempted to have the same amount of money but know that our boss isn't watching and so watch the television rather than do our work and we're tempted to have the same amount of

money but we're tempted to have the same amount of money temptations to to get things to gain power and success in some way without having to do the hard work so those are the temptations Jesus goes through

[27:17] how does Jesus respond to the temptations uh anybody want to say i think we might have already said with scriptures yeah scriptures yeah he responds with scriptures and so verse four Jesus said it is written man shall not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God responds with scripture there why don't we just turn back and and read that scripture the quotes from deuteronomy 8 i'm always very helpful when we see other scriptures quoted in the bible to turn back and and see the context and sort of work out well why might this be here so deuteronomy chapter 8 verse 1 to 3 this is Moses speaking to the people telling them do do not forget the Lord do not forget what he's done for you so chapter 8 verse 1 to 3 be careful to follow every command i am giving you today so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land that the Lord promises on oath to your ancestors remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these 40 years to humble and test you in order to know what was in your hearts whether or not you would keep his commands in order to know what was in your hands he humbled you causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna which neither you nor your ancestors had known to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God Moses wants the people to remember remember what the Lord has done remember how the Lord's been teaching you to live in dependence upon the Lord and upon his words looking to the Lord for their needs to be met including their need of hunger and so he provided that the manna from heaven for them and the Lord Jesus takes this and quotes this back to the devil then the devil tries to quote scripture back at him two can play at that game can't they verse 6 and it's a compelling argument and he will command his angels concerning you he's going to protect you you're the son of God but verse 7 Jesus replied back again with scripture do not put the Lord your God to the test do you not test God's Jesus is to be worshipped and adored but he's not to come to gain that quickly through a publicity stunt the temptation for Jesus was forget about the suffering show how powerful you are then you'll have thousands of worshipers but Jesus says don't test me and then in the final uh temptation that we have here in Matthew 4 uh Jesus um um um um um in verse 10 again from uh deuteronomy uh saying away from me Satan for it is written worship the Lord your God and serve

him only the final one after Satan has offered him success and power without having to suffer Jesus says away from me and says i am to worship the Lord my God only he himself obviously is God but in his humanity he's to worship the Lord his God only and he's to submit as the son of God to his father and to serve him only because Jesus has come to fulfill his father's plan not to worship the devil not to fall into his schemes and the devil in that last one as we noted uh is offering to Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and Jesus has something else to say about this later on in Matthew doesn't he Matthew 16 that's 24 Matthew 16 verse 24 this is Jesus's way when faced with that sort of temptation and Jesus said to his disciples whoever wants to meet my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me for whoever wants to save their life will lose it but whoever loses their life for me will find it what good will it be for someone to gain the whole world and yet forfeit their soul what can anyone give in exchange for their soul Jesus is giving us words we could say if we're tempted with that that that temptation of power and success here that that's fleeting we can say well what good would it be for me to gain the whole world and forfeit my soul Lord Jesus experiences these temptations temptations and uh there's one final thing or for the answer to the question i was about to ask on the screen um let's ignore that um there's one final thing i mean the first two temptations in verse two and six what what does the devil try to make Jesus doubt uh certainly in the temptation he he's trying to doubt God's provision yeah i think there's there's

something common to both so you see uh valerie go for it yeah yeah yeah notice that verse three first of all if you are the son of god and then verse six if you are the son of god is it is it actually making doubt or is he yeah being sarcastic interesting interesting i i've i've read it as sort of uh yeah is he is he making him question you are the son of god but i yeah i like the sarcasm kind of thing i mean it changes everything i'm about to say um yeah yeah i was gonna turn to that let's turn to it now let actually thank you ruse and

matthew 27 verse 39 i think it is matthew 27 verse 39 those who passed by hurled insults at him shaking their heads and saying you who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days save yourself calm down from the cross if you are the son of god um your thoughts uh from our summer and rays are actually very helpful um i i um in in helping us to think this three together so when when jesus is asked if you are the son of god perhaps perhaps the the devil um perhaps those people saying it to him on the cross sort of suggesting if you're the son of god we imagine you could do this and we imagine you would want this we imagine this would appeal to you um interesting that i'll i'll uh i'll i'll i'll share with you my thought and then if you've got other thoughts if you want to push back on it please do um so the devil says if if you're if you are the son of god um temptation which i think is as old as time actually when satan was in the garden he said to eve did god really say that did did god really mean that and perhaps appealing to jesus trying to appeal to jesus um does god really want you to miss out on turning those stones to bread does god really want you to miss out on all the power does he really want you to go to the cross and suffer for us sort of planting that seed of doubt in him doubting god's goodness to him doubting god's good plan of salvation temptation but i think we can we can praise god here that there is a perfect man who hasn't fallen into this temptation this scheme of the devil is perfect and he has stood firm against the strong power of temptation and he continues to show himself as the perfect son of god throughout the rest of his life even on the cross as we read from matthew 27 if you are the son of god take yourself down off the cross and he endured a lot he endured the authorities against him he endured people who were just blind couldn't see that he's the son of god he endured sinful people around him demanding things of him demanding signs he endured the agony of the garden of gethsemane he was patient with his disciples who just couldn't stay awake to watch and pray he endured the betrayal of one of his closer friends he endured mockery he endured that execution on the cross jesus could have said no i've had enough i'm coming down you're right if i am the son of god i have this great power i'm gonna come down but no the perfect son of god passed the test he did not fall into sin he died on the cross

he endured the wrath of god on our sin for us endured the death we deserve to face and now because of his death for us us because of his work for us as the son of god we now find ourselves as god's children god's sons god's daughters and we may be lured into temptation and think well yeah as god's child yes i i do deserve that or we tend to think if i do this little sin it's not gonna harm me too much god still loves me but as god's children saved by the son of god we have the spirit with us just as jesus did here in the wilderness first one then jesus was led by the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted the devil we read in galatians that we too have the spirit of god working in us galatians chapter 5 verse 22 to 26 the fruit of the spirit is love joy peace forbearance kindness goodness faithfulness gentleness and self-control against such things there is no such law those who belong to christ jesus have been crucified jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires since we live by the spirit let us keep in step with the spirit let us not become conceited provoking and envying one another we as god's children have the spirit living inside us that the fruit of the spirit is being produced within us and so we ought to live by the spirit we ought to keep in step with the spirit we need to walk as those who belong to christ and because we belong to christ we've crucified the flesh with its passions and desires there are temptations which are going to come and so we need to pray to god have mercy upon us we need to fight those temptations like the lord jesus does with the spirit's help in us perhaps we need to um ask for god's help to help us to learn the scriptures that we need as we face the temptations in life so that we can like the lord jesus say and no i'm not going to do this because your word says this and i am god's child and because i'm god's child i have every good thing from him and why don't we have these couple of questions and then if you if you disagree with me on anything please uh push back um but a couple of questions in groups again um that question that we started with jesus experienced temptation that's good news for us after hearing from this passage how do you react to that statement and secondly how are you helped by this passage in the face of temptation um chat chat with your neighbors and then uh be great to hear from you and if you've got questions or want to tell me i'm

Well, I remember the early days of starting to preach. I thought, well, I'll just listen to someone else's sermon on that and try and repeat it. Doesn't work. They try and take those shortcuts. Yeah. Yeah. It's very much of the talks. You know that the Lord Jesus was perfectly God in the book of New York now? It's the second avenue. It's the first page of New York. Jesus also said, he said, I do nothing with my own view, only what the Father shows me. I say, nothing with my own, only what the Father gives me to say. I'm right up to Gethsemane in the garden. Nevertheless, Father, the Bible will be done. [53:21] Yeah. Yeah. And there's a public life, a perfect step that can happen. Yeah. Yeah. That life is now ours.

Basically, if any of those experiences can happen. Basically, if any of those experiences can happen. Basically, if any of those experiences can happen. Basically, if any of those experiences can happen. Basically, if any of those experiences can happen. Basically, if any of those experiences can happen. Basically, if any of those experiences can happen. Utility, meaninglessness, it's all.

Keep going. The outcome is to increasingly understand what means of the future. We love so much. Yeah, we love so much.

Yeah, we all love. We all love. Yeah, we forget. I think we do.

Thank you. We love. Let's say it for an hour and then we'll sing a final song. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you so much for the Lord Jesus, for his perfect, sinless life.

[54:51] Thank you as we read this chapter, as we think and meditate upon it, that we can find comfort to ourselves as sinners who are prone to wonder from you, the God we love.

Prone to doubt you and your goodness. Lord, help us, we pray, and have mercy on us.

Help us to remember that when we do fall, we have a great and perfect high priest. help us to grow in fighting the temptations of the evil one.

Help us to grow in our confidence in Scripture and in your ways. Help us to grow, we pray. Help us, we pray, in your mercy.

Help us, in your mercy, to find those ways out, those exit signs, knowing that you don't tempt us beyond what we can bear, but that you do provide us with ways out.

[56:08] Help us as we support one another in this, as brothers and sisters in Christ. Help us, we pray. In Jesus' name we ask. Amen.

Let's sing a final song. We had about four songs for us this evening. We've only 70. But why don't we sing this hymn, Love Divine or Love Excelling.

And during the hymn, it talks about praying, really, take away the love of sinning and looking forward to the final day when we get to be in glory and we'll be pure and sinless, spotless.

So let's stand and let's sing together. Amen. Amen. Amen.