

Matthew 4: 1-11 // Temptation

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[0:00] After all that talking about what's going on in the world, I thought I would do a really uplifting sermon on temptation. As we've studied last week, we know that God does not do evil.

Darkness cannot have fellowship with light. And God is light. God is love. He cannot lead us to a place of temptation in the sense of tempting us.

He would never do that to us. But there are sometimes tests that roll into our lives. And they're very different from temptations. We can be tempted in the test, but the test is different.

And I remember thinking of this, and she'll be here in a couple of weeks, my other daughter Beth.

When I first took her out driving, she was about 14. And it was in this huge parking lot, right?

Just to be clear, not on the road, but on this huge parking lot. And she got behind there and, you know, she just kind of put her foot on the gas a little bit. And I'm thinking, oh, this is going to go well. This is good.

[1:28] She's just easing into this. This is nice. And then she realized the power that she had. And that foot went down. And it was a big enough parking lot where I wasn't too worried about it.

I thought, well, I'll just let her get out of the system. I said, okay, honey, you might want to just kind of drop the foot off the pedal a bit. She was like, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, like this. I thought, oh, boy, okay. This is a task, Lord.

Help me understand what I'm supposed to get out of this. But anyways, we got to a place where she wasn't cackling so hard. No damage was done. Anyway, tests come upon us.

They're different from temptations. There's an old story that goes back a long, long, long, long, long way. And it's the story of the cocoon and the moth.

If you've heard of this before, just tune out for a couple of minutes. But if you haven't, it's an interesting story. Because moths, they're in a cocoon. And they fight for their life to get out of that thing.

[2:25] They struggle. It's like a fight of life or death to become someone, something that they're meant to be all along. But right now, they're encased.

They're trapped. They can't quite get out. They're just struggling. They'll poke a little hole, the tiniest of holes. And they try and just work at it. And they're just like shouldering. And they're just doing this, everything they possibly can.

We can come along. We can take a knife. And you can just make a little slit and make it easier for them. And they would be able to get out of that cocoon. And you'd think, hey, that's a good thing.

The reality is that it doesn't allow them to be strong for their life ahead. Sometimes in the struggle, we learn the tools and the necessary things that we have to have in order to be strong for out there in the world.

We can make things easier. But sometimes God, I think, takes us through difficult testing times to help us be strong for other people. You know, I've said it before.

[3:27] You know, being a child from an alcoholic home, I can tell you right now, it's a nightmare. If you've lived that, you know what I'm talking about. And I became a Christian while I was still in that home.

And there were moments where I'm thinking, Lord, why did I have to go through this? Why did I have to go through all of that pain and fear? Even as a man now, I still struggle with things from back then.

I mean, Lord, why? And then I became a youth pastor. And as a youth pastor, you're dealing with youth. And it really is a family ministry. It's not just dealing with teens.

It's a family ministry. And you're dealing with situations, the same situations I grew up in. And then I'm like, oh, okay.

Thank you, Lord. It was painful then, but now I'm seeing you're turning beauty from ashes. And you're helping me understand how to help and pray for this kid or that kid. And you start to see the bigger picture.

[4:24] But we can't at the moment because we're just trapped in the cocoon. And we can't see out. We're begging for an escape sometimes. But that test comes along. And I think it makes us who we're meant to be, though we do not see it in those times at all.

But here we talk about something a little bit different. Because the words can be confused between temptation and testing in this and the original language. But I'm going to stick to what it says here. Verses 1 and 2. Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting 40 days and 40 nights, he was hungry.

That should sound like a no-brainer. I don't know how long a fast you've done, but I've done some stretches. And yeah, you're hungry, right? The thing after a prolonged fast, though, especially one this long, is that hunger hits you the first 24 hours.

You feel it. If you can make it past the first 24 hours of fast, you're going to be okay. Second or third day, depending on who you are, for me it hits usually around the morning of the third day. Where I was like, okay, I really could break this right now.

[5:32] I'm hungry, okay? But then after that, you go for a long stretch, where you don't feel hunger, not in the same way. At the 40-day mark, it would have actually been the body's warning sign.

You're going to die now. When you get hungry after a prolonged stretch of not eating, that's the body's red alarm siren going off.

Like, you have to do something right now. That's where Jesus was at. We have to understand, being fully God and fully man, he experienced this fully. So let's take a look at that.

This was not self-denial for the sake of self-denial. I would like to say, I would love to say, that Jesus could have come down and did the work of the cross in a weekend.

I mean, at the end of the day, that really could have happened. He could have just come down, died on the cross, rose on the third day, and we're good. The work would have been done.

[6:35] So why live 30 years? I like to look at it this way, that all along, Jesus is teaching us a new way to be human.

He's teaching us a way of living life with him, how we can look more like him by following him. And he's giving us examples of this. There are so many times in this passage we're going to read that Jesus could have called down his divine power, solved his problem, shoot away the devil, okay?

And he would have been good. He would have been fed, right? In this particular verse we're reading right now, and I'll get into some more later, he would have been fed, he would have been okay, the hunger would have been solved. But how would that work for you and me?

See, Jesus used the word of God. He used the word to defend himself against the wiles of the devil. He didn't use his own willpower, he didn't call down divine power that you and I don't have access to like that.

He just simply used the word of God to defeat the devil. You know how encouraging that can be for you and me? That we have that same tool available to us.

[7:45] And that's what Jesus did, I think, to show us how to live through this. Hebrews 5.8 says, although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. Here he's suffering.

He's going through this incredible fast and is tempted at the end of it. This was Jesus relying on God the Father. Sorry. Father, I'm thinking of food.

Anyway. That's what a period of self-denial should do for us. We should not rely on our own strength, but lean on God's strength. You'd think even Jesus would have been spared temptation. He was praying right before this. He was baptized just before this. Immediately before, there was like this mountaintop experience. The Holy Spirit comes down and God said, this is my son of whom I'm well pleased.

You would think that this would be the pinnacle of what Jesus is going through right now. And yet now he's led into temptation. And it's a kind of a funny thing that you may have already noticed, I'm sure, a thousand times.

[8:49] It's that, you know, you're not often tempted when you're rocking the spiritual life. When you're reading your Bible all the time, you might be tempted with power, pride.

You might be tempted in those ways. Don't get me wrong. That's a reality. But all of these things like human want, which is hunger, right? We're tempted when, sometimes when we're at our lowest point.

When we don't have that strength in ourselves left. Where we absolutely need the word of God to remind us afresh his goodness and what he's done for us and how much he loves us.

Verses three to four. And the tempter came and said to him, if you are the son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread. But he answered, it is written, men shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Now in the Judean wilderness, I can tell you flat out, it is not, it is not a flat desert. It's like a rock garden. There are rocks everywhere.

[9:54] It would not have been hard for Jesus just to turn one of them into a loaf of bread. It wouldn't even have affected the landscape. He didn't need to conjure up a rock. Like I said, they are everywhere.

You have to step around and go over them in order to get through. This wouldn't have been difficult. Satan wasn't questioning Jesus' divinity. The word if here, like if you are the son of God, is the same in some languages as since, since you are the son of God.

Okay? If you are the son of God, prove yourself. Prove yourself. He challenged Jesus to prove himself through a miraculous work that would satisfy a selfish desire.

the first temptation of Christ was to be selfish. Feed yourself. Nobody's looking, man. Just you and me out here. Right? I kind of wonder what that dialogue would have been like.

Nobody's looking. I won't tell anybody. Just make yourself a loaf of bread and we can have a conversation, you and me. But Jesus knew that that wasn't in his father's will.

[10:58] But it's interesting, the same Jesus that walked on water, that fed the 5,000, that brought Lazarus back from the dead.

Making a loaf of bread is no big deal at all. Well within his ability to do so. The suggestion was that Jesus use his abilities to provide food for himself to be selfish.

Selfish on another level too because you and I cannot do that. I don't care how long you stare at a rock and go bread, bread, bread, bread, bread. You're not turning to bread. It's not happening.

Okay?

Jesus could. I hope nobody goes up and tries that. Anyway. But Jesus was being tested by the point of one of his strengths.

He could do anything he wanted. He could have done this. But I find it's interesting that this is the same temptation that came to Jesus on the cross. If you are the son, God, come down and save yourself.

[12:00] You don't have to endure all of that. You don't have to hang on the cross and die. You're hanging with a thief and a murderer. You're hanging with people that deserve to die and you were there with them.

You don't have to do that. But Jesus chose to be there being surrounded by sinners, people who needed mercy. He chose to do this. But that temptation to save himself, to save his character, to save his pride, his ego, all of that was there.

Wouldn't it be great if he just could come down and summon a thousand angels in that moment to say, see, I told you, you're hanging the wrong guy. But he didn't do that because the price had to be paid.

He was thinking eternally and not selfishly. Deuteronomy 8, verse 3.

Because Jesus used the word of God to defend himself. And these passages come from Deuteronomy. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

[13:17] Jesus shows us that God's word is as precious as food. God's word is important to us in our daily walk. When Satan suggested, it kind of makes sense, I mean, from a logical point of view.

You're God? You're hungry? Rock? Make bread? I mean, that's logical, right? And hunger represents human want.

And if Jesus is going to use his strength to remove himself from human need, then he wouldn't be showing us how to stand against this temptation. You and I cannot go where he went with this.

If he had used his divine power to make bread, you and I can't. So again, Jesus is showing us a new way of being human. One that's real.

One that's honest. One that is steeped in the word of God. Jesus could have thought, well, I'm God? I don't have to put up with this human hunger.

[14:23] You know, y'all don't shower enough. I mean, he could have just been so entitled about everything. But he didn't. He chose to relate with us, even in temptation. Jesus would not receive bread or hunger satisfied until it was God's timing.

And I'm not meaning to spoil the story, but angels come and minister and I'm pretty sure they took care of that hunger too. Jesus relied on the power and truth of God's word.

He was willing to fight this battle as a man. Just like you and I would have to fight the same battles that we have to go through when it comes to temptation. temptation. It's difficult.

It can be private. It can be very, very challenging. But Jesus shows us this way. He could have sent Satan into another galaxy if he wanted.

Part of me kind of thinks that that would have been cool, but he didn't. There are plans for him yet to be unfolded. But instead, Jesus resisted him in a way that we can also resist Satan and his messengers.

[15:29] Jesus used scripture to battle Satan's temptations. And you know, there's a funny reel for Instagram that I saw and I just keep thinking about it when it comes to this because, you know, we can get in that place of just, Lord, this is really hard.

This is really difficult. I'm really feeling under it. If I just satisfy this temptation, it's going to go away and I'll just be clear of it and then I'll say sorry and we'll be good. Right? We get into that temptation of that backward loop.

None of that is true or helps, but we can lie to ourselves. This reel in particular, though, and you might have recognized it, it's just that, you know, and I'll add in a little line there, but this woman is asking her friend or telling her friend, you know, I'm just feeling a little depressed right now and things are really hard and I, you know, I just don't feel like going outside or anything and so the friend is like, well, have you had water today?

No. Have you eaten today? No. Have you gone for a walk for your mental health? No. I would add in, have you read your Bible? No. Well, come on, right?

Get a glass of water, have some food, go out for a walk, read the Word, right? Let the Lord's Word soak, you know, soak in it. Get yourself into that place because the temptation is to isolate you.

[16:43] The enemy will always want to isolate you from others. I'm fine, I can handle this on my own. No, you can't. You can't. You think you can, but that's relying on human wisdom, not on God's provision in the Word.

So we got to get to that place where someone says, have you had water? Yep. You had food? Yes. Have you read the Word of God? Yes. Okay, let's pray, right? We can resist temptation in the same way shining the light of God's truth upon the lies because willpower does not cut it.

I've done enough addictions counseling with people to tell you right now and you know as well as I do, willpower does not work. Makes you feel like a champion for the first 24 hours until you fall again.

Now, we need, we need the Lord's help. We need His persistence in our lives. Verses 5 to 7, then the devil took Him to the holy city and set Him on a pinnacle of the temple 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.

And Jesus said to Him, again, it is written, you shall not put the Lord your God to the test. So now Satan's turning up his strategy. He is now using Scripture.

[18:06] He's now using Scripture and quoting it. And that's a scary place to be. Because that means that anybody can quote Scripture and not handle it well. We have to be really careful.

If we hear a verse, if we hear anything like that, put it in context. Read the whole chapter. What's it really saying? Understand what the Lord's Word is saying without just listening to a clip or a reel and saying, oh, that's true.

Check it out. Fact check it. Is it true? Is it what God's Word is actually saying? You could say that Satan was tempting Jesus to manipulate God, the Father, into a supernatural event.

Think about it this way. From the top of the pinnacle of the temple to the bottom of the Kidron Valley, it's about 200 feet. If Jesus were to throw himself off of that and God were to save him,

everybody around would say, whoa, that guy is divinely gifted.

Okay? Oh, man, God is with this guy. He would be rushing the Lord's purpose. The cross had not come yet. Jesus would be testing God if he fell to that temptation.

[19:19] He would be saying, you know what? I have a destiny. Nothing's going to happen, so I'm going to fling myself off that building. You know, the funny thing about gravity is it doesn't matter how much you fight it, you fall. Okay? You fall.

And I was one of those idiot kids who listened to his big brother and said, jump off the roof with an umbrella. It'll be fun. Yeah. I had balloons strapped to my arms and everything and an umbrella. I was about five years old. Yeah. Did not go the way I wanted. He was nine years older than me, so he got away with a lot of that. But anyways, I'm still here. Okay. Satan was appealing to a temptation for each of us and that's to have approval from the Father and get public recognition. He was appealing to Jesus in this way. And there's something deep within us that can fall to this and you might say, oh no, no, no. I have seen a lot of pastors fall because of power.

I've seen a lot of pastors fall because of pride. Oh, that'll never happen to me. I've seen a lot of pastors fall because of ego. Well, if only I was allowed to rule the world.

[20:33] No. See, there's temptations around every corner with that stuff. We have to be careful and soaked in the word of God. We have to allow him to rule and not be trying to make our own kingdoms.

Matthew chapter 6, verse 1. Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. Now, I have a bit of a story with this and I'll keep it short, but when I was in my internship before I was ordained and sent out to plant a church, I was in a group.

There was about 12 of us. Not by design, it was just the number that has happened to be there. And we met twice a week and one of the duties we had to share was to clean the toilets of the church.

Okay? Because the pastor who raised me up thought, you know, if you want to be at the pulpit, you start with the garbage jobs. I have the same heart. You know, if you want to be in leadership, let us see you demonstrably serving the church in a way that gets you dirty.

You know, maybe not physically, but just in that sense where you put your heart to something and you put your time to it. Not just because it seems like a good idea. Serve. Serve when no one's looking.

[21:52] Serve when you're serving Jesus with all of your heart. Do that. Do that. So this is what we were challenged with. And it was an interesting one. And there's a new guy named Ken that came on board.

God bless him. You know, nice guy. But he didn't quite get the jive of what was going on. And the pastor was actually preaching, or sharing with us about this.

Matthew 6, verse 1. I'm going to read it again. Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them. For then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. And the guy who was running the group, he just, he was saying like, you know, do things invisibly.

Do things for the Lord that nobody can see. And don't ask for a reward. Don't ask for praise. Do it because you love him and you love his people. Not that you love attention.

That was the jive of it. Okay? And he used this whole thing. He said, you know, it's kind of like if this whole idea of like, you know, for then you'll have no reward in your Father who is in heaven. It's like, you do something nice and then you tell somebody about it or tell your church about it and it's like, poof, well, you got your reward.

[23:02] Okay? So Ken suddenly comes in. He's a little bit late and he's got rubber gloves on for whatever reasons. You know, I think it was to kind of demonstrate his thing. He comes in and he didn't realize that we all took turns cleaning the toilets.

This was no big deal. He comes in, yeah, you know, I cleaned toilets before I got here. That's why I was late. And the guy leading the group just looks at him and goes, poof, and we all burst into laughter because of course we knew what he was talking about.

Had to explain it again. Sometimes we can do that. You know? I've done this. I've done this for the church. Look at me. Isn't this wonderful? Poof. You got your reward.

Do things invisibly. Do things because you love Jesus. Do things because you just can't help yourself because of what he's done in your life. And don't look for a reward.

There's a reason why I don't thank a thousand people up here figuratively saying from the pulpit. I may give you the attaboy. I may say I love you and man, you're doing an amazing job one-on-one. [24:04] But don't do it for that. Do it because you love Jesus. Do it because you can't help yourself to serve. Okay? Don't be a Ken.

anyway. The devil can use the phrase it is written. Be assured he's memorized the Bible. He's an expert at quoting scripture and out of context. You know, we don't have to look too far than the Garden of Eden for that when he's talking with Eve. It's like, did God really tell you not to eat from all of these trees?

That was the truth. It was only one, right? But he's saying, did God really, he's just stretching the truth just one inch. You know? And look how that turned out.

But this time he used Psalm 91 verses 11 to 12 and he happened to miss and leave out a line, of course. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways and on their hands they will bear you up lest you strike your foot against the stone.

[25:12] He forgot in all your ways. Satan didn't use the word properly. He edited it for his own purposes which immediately should negate it.

And Jesus was not fooled. We could say he falsely quoted and wrongly applied this verse if you left something out. How many times has that happened in churches to us?

I don't know about you but I've had people misquote things plenty. I've had people say well it's biblical when it's like no it's not. It's not. I dare you to find this in the Christian Bible.

It's not there but people are hard set. No. It's scriptural. No it's not. We have to be really really careful with it. He left out to guard you in all your ways because Satan was tempting Jesus to neglect the mission he was on to force God into a miracle to save Jesus right then and there when Jesus' whole purpose was to go to the cross and die.

The temptation was to go around and to be able to avoid the cross but there's another temptation that's coming even more than that. Verse 7 Jesus said to him again it is written you shall not put the Lord your God to the test and Jesus responded with scripture but scripture applied accurately to the situation.

[26:44] Now I do find it funny because we get into a place at times where if someone lives and reads and breathes by the Bible we can mistakenly think that person is a legalist but that's us not understanding what legalism means.

Somebody said that of me this week that I was a legalist and it's like you know man I got tattoos all up my shoulders I am not a legalist by this very definition I'll tell you right now why. It's because legalism the literal definition of it is someone who is trying to get closer earn favor from God by observing the law and forcing others to do so as well.

That's the definition of legalism. Okay. Being someone who reads the Bible is someone who is intaking God's word being molded by it and understanding how many layers of grace there are and that we're able to live by this new mercy every day and share that mercy and grace with other people because it's been extended to us.

That's not legalism. Legalism is when we look at the Old Testament for what's considered sanctification. I want to get better with God. I want to be made more like him so I'm going to do all of these laws ignore about 90% of them but really fixate on 10 of them so I can look really good and tell everybody that they're not spiritual unless they do the same.

That's legalism. They want the Old Testament for sanctification. They want the New Testament for salvation. It does not work that way. It does not work that way.

[28:21] Romans 7:6 says for we no longer live by the written code but by the Spirit of God. Jesus is the fulfillment of it all. He paid the price for us all.

That's a rabbit trail. But it should be a warning to us though. We shouldn't demand something spectacular from God to prove his love for us. There is no greater proof of God's love than the cross.

It's the greatest love letter you will ever receive in your life. I don't care who your partner is or was or whatever thing like that. The greatest love letter you will ever receive is the cross and Jesus dying on it.

It's God saying I love you this much. I love you enough to die for you that you can be free. That's how much God loves us.

And the devil wanted to tempt at Satan. Or sorry the devil yeah wouldn't that be nice. The devil wanted to tempt Jesus away from this. Verses 8 to 9. Again the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their glory and he said to them all these I will give you if you fall down and worship me.

[29 : 29] You notice how Satan didn't actually show Jesus all of the sin of the kingdoms. He just showed the glory of them. Look how beautiful this is. Right? And there's an argument to be said that we gave Satan the keys to the car in the great fall.

He's not the owner of the world but I think you can look around right now and say he's running around pretty chaotically free. There's something awful about stuff that's happening right now and you don't have to look too far to find it.

The world is evil not because God made it evil it's because we made mistakes. We have made mistakes. this temptation invited Jesus to avoid the cross.

You see it wasn't I mean the whole thing he's coming here to redeem us to give us a way back to the father to pay the penalty for our sin to pay the price for us to be free.

Oh Jesus you don't have to do that. You don't have to go to the cross. That's painful. You don't have to do that at all. You know what? Let me give you all the kingdoms of this world. All you have to do is bow down and worship to me.

[30 : 39] That's all you gotta do. Nobody's looking. It's just you and me. Right? Just bow down. It'll be our little secret. You can imagine that conversation of how it goes.

Jesus could have all the kingdoms. He could have all the stuff that he came for. The people though were being missed out. Because you see this is one of these things. This passage actually gives us such an interesting insight into the enemy's mind.

In other places we won't see quite this insight into the enemy's mind in other places in the Bible. But right here we see this very clearly. He does not care about you and me. He doesn't care about the kingdoms.

He doesn't care about power and authority. He doesn't care about controlling the world system. He wants to be worshipped. He wants God to affirm him.

He wants glory for himself. That's all he cares about. That's what he cared about in the beginning. That's what he cared about when he fell. It's what he cares about here.

[31 : 43] Take these old rusty cars of kingdoms. I don't care. Just bow down and worship me. That's what he wanted. Right? And Jesus was being tempted to avoid the cross.

all Jesus would have to do is give Satan what he was longing for since the fall. He wanted worship and recognition from God himself.

But Satan is very much the one that you read in these words. Isaiah 14 verses 12 to 14. How you are fallen from heaven, O day star, son of dawn. How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low.

You said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven above the stars of God. I will set my throne on high and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds.

I will make myself the most high. That's all he wants is worship and recognition. That's all he wants. Satan showed Jesus the splendor of the kingdoms, but he didn't show them their sin.

[32 : 52] In this fallen world, this mess that we have from Adam all the way here, our sin separates us from God. It's like filters. This is why I was talking about confession last week.

To confess doesn't forgive the sin, but it wipes the relationship between ourselves and God clean again. We can see him, we can hear him, maybe even sense him in your presence.

You can be closer to God through that confession. You don't have to confess to me. I'm no priest. You confess to the Lord. And I challenge you to share it with someone too.

Because the thing about temptation that we see here, Jesus never sinned, but he was tempted, which means temptation itself is not sin.

It's what we do with it that can become sin. Anger is a very healthy emotion. It really is. I do believe there's something called righteous anger.

[33 : 53] We see this in Jesus flipping tables. We'll get to that in a few weeks. So there is an anger that is healthy, but what we do with anger can be sinful and unhealthy, where we hurt others.

Maybe we harm ourselves. I mean, you can go down a long list. Okay? So in that way we have to remember that the enemy, when we are tempted wants us to feel shame. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, look,

you're so close to the edge right now, why don't you just flip over?

You know, you've come this far, why don't you just get it over with and then I'll leave you alone.

none of that is true, but it's the lie that the liar wants us to believe. Temptation is not a sin.

You can be freed from it. You don't have to walk down that road. You don't have to choose to go down that road. Verse 10, and 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.

And Jesus commanded the devil to leave. Wouldn't it be amazing if we had that authority? We do. We do. We really, really do. I mean, I read that and I'm thinking like, yes, I want to be able to do that.

[35:09] And I'm like, wait a minute, we can. We can. If Jesus is in your heart. James 4, verse 7, Submit yourselves therefore to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Flee, like he'll run. Not in your name, but in Jesus' name. And there's something very sweet and special about being able to read the word of God and arm yourself for what is coming.

For all of these things that we go through, the tests and the trials, the temptations, knowing that God is good, that he loves us, that he's there for us. These are things we need to have implanted in our heart day by day.

we want to resist the devil just about any other way other than the word of God sometimes. Well, if I just listen to this praise song, you know, sometimes that helps. Okay?

If it's speaking the word of God, if it's not, it's not helpful. Okay? You can do it, you're a great Christian, you know, that's not, anyway, that's another rabbit trail.

[36:10] verse 11, and then the devil left him, and behold, the angels came and were ministering to him. Jesus won because he understood Satan's mode of attack, lies and deception, lies and deception, and he used and misused the word of God because the primary weapon of our enemy is deceit.

And there's nothing scarier than a narcissist because they're the greatest liars and they often lie to themselves. Okay? They're right in their own rightness. Satan is right in his own rightness.

And all he can do to you and me who have Jesus in our hearts is lie. He's a master at smoke and mirrors. He can take something that we're afraid of and amplify it to full-blown anxiety, but the word of God will tell us otherwise.

So, Colossians 2.15 and I'll be closing shortly after this. He disarmed the rulers and authority and put them to open shame by triumphing over them in him.

What can an unarmed enemy do to you? Nothing. They can make themselves really loud, you know like those sun bears, right? When they come up against a threat, they kind of stand up like this and they're like about two feet high, you know, adorable little cuddly things and they're like, I'm big, I'm big, I'm huge.

[37:37] That's kind of what the enemy does. He's defeated. He is utterly defeated because of the cross. All he can do is like, whoa, I'm scary, right?

Get out of here, man. In Jesus' name, get out of here. You have no place here. That is the ability we have in Jesus' name.

That is what we can do. We need to build ourselves up in God's word and have it in our hearts. we need to learn how to defeat temptation in the way that Jesus did.

Where everyone before him had failed, he succeeded, he used the word of God to defeat the enemy. So shouldn't this be a wonderful invitation for us to do the same?

Because the real answer in this passage is not that you can overcome temptation, even though that's true. It's that he already did for you.

[38:35] So lean into him and lean on him. He's already won the victory. You and I can walk in that victory. So let's do that.

Because God never forsakes those who endure temptation. Verse 11 again, Then the devil left him and behold angels came and were ministering to him. God is never going to leave you alone in that temptation.

temptation. He provides a way out. Corinthians 10, 13, I think it is. Yeah. So yes, this passage shows how we can overcome, but it also shows us who our champion is.

Jesus is our champion. He has gone before us. He's fought this battle. He has won the victory. So we need to just breathe, submit the temptations that you're going through to him.

And the temptations are pretty varied, right? They're all over the map. I was told in leadership, in particular, you're tempted by either money, sex, or power. Sometimes all three.

[39 : 45] But sometimes the temptation to not hit them when you feel like it, you know, that's there too. The temptation not to swear a lot when you're feeling pent up and frustrated, that's there too.

The temptation to lie because, well, it would just make everybody feel better. The temptation to, I could go down the list, but you already know because we live this together, right? Submit those things to him and say, Lord, I need your strength.

I need your power. And the only place you're going to find that is in his word. So read his word today. We have this victory. Walk in it.

Read his word. Do not walk in our own strength or on man's wisdom. And if you want a challenge for today, if you want a reading challenge, I challenge everyone to do the John challenge.

Read a chapter of John every day, the book of John, and write notes. What did I see? Is this a prayer to pray? Is this a sin to confess? Look at the Bible that way and read a chapter every day and just let it soak.

[40 : 46] Do it for 30 days. Do it for 30 days. Just read as much of the New Testament as you can. But just start with a John challenge and just see how it goes. Let's pray. Thank you.