

# Jesus' Temptations

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 18 May 2025

Preacher: Craig Dowling

[ 0 : 00 ] Sylvester Stallone in an interview last Rocky movie said something for him when discussing Rocky!

Get the storyline. And in this interview on YouTube he encouraged the first scenes in Rocky one but watch them with fresh in all the details all the crosses etc because if you do he says that this whole movie written around fighting is actually not but is the spiritual fight. He states his original sole idea of creating the Rocky series like him and us here today in our battle to fight the good fights and keep the faith. Because I mean like words in our reading there.

Did you take note of what Jesus went through? Look here verse 2. So for 40 days he was tempted by the devil during those days so so at the end of them he was hungry.

Then the devil said to him, If you are, tell the stones to become bread. You see what this fight involves is is so lonesome. He's dire. He's so lonesome.

And this this this this this is evil knows no limits. He lives where it genuinely hurt the most.

[ 2 : 16 ] The fight is clear for everyone. Jesus valiantly fasted. No food. All so lonesome.

The enemy went bang. Opportunity noted. Starving Jesus will turn the stones to bread then. Come on. Any real God coup the enemy has said to him. Really do it. Really prove it. And then the whole world will know.

Do you see what vile bully does? He goes for weakness. He preys on weakness. Life. 40 days of fasting in the service of God had left Jesus family.

40 days the absolute maximum the human body can go before it begins to turn. And Jesus in his efforts to run this race that we're all running endured that 40 days.

And so yep his stomach was absolute. So to the stomach Satan went. To the stomach Satan went.

[ 3 : 29 ] Are you empty? Where are you hungry? Giving success. Running for power. Looking for intimacy.

Dispirited at your feeling in fear. Be aware of your weaknesses. Your emptiness. From the lesson. From the four. Taking the lesson.

From the very beginning of chapter four. Because. That is where he will go for you. So bring them to God. Before Satan. Jesus' fight.

Of course went on. More temptation. More temptation. More temptation. More empty spots. More vulnerable patches. As scripture.

We do not have a high priest. Who is unable to emphasize with our weakness. We have one. A high priest. Who has been tempted.

[ 4 : 28 ] In every way. Yet. He did not sin. Now I want to think about this. For what does this truly, truly mean?

Well it means a few. Ultimately. It means we have no excuse. We have no excuse. That when we pray.

We are praying to a God. Who knows exactly. Who is. Who knows. How good. And joyful. It presents itself. Who is.

We cannot. Fudge. Our way. Around. Any. Of this. Whether it's. To lust. To jealousy. To pride. Or anything else. We cannot excuse it. By saying. Nope. He knows it. And he knows how it feels.

[ 5 : 24 ] Here. In the Bible. The truth is. He. Would know. The full. Even more than us. For think about it.

We give in. The sin occurs. And it's over. Jesus never gave in. The temptation. Never ended.

I.e. He really. Does. Understand. Even. Jesus. Temptation. In the desert. Was dire. And it left him. Completely.

Broken. He was so broken. That the enemy's. Final. Attempt. Was. Simply. Throw yourself. From the high tops.

Of the kingdom. You're. You're a broken mess. What have you got to lose? And anyway. The angels. Will catch you. So go on. Do it. Prove you can. Jesus. Was suffering.

[ 6 : 22 ] He was broken. He was at his. Just like the hunger. Satan. Goes. Right. To. That. And again.

You see. How vile. And evil. This is. You see. What exactly. We. Are up against. In our fight. And in our race. And again. On that note. Of our fight. And our race. What about our brokenness? Ever been completely.

Bedridden. Diagnosis of illness. Ever been bankrupt. Made redundant. Outright sacked. Made home. Demanded at work. Single parenting.

Marriage breakup. Debts building up. Simply put. Ever. These. These scenarios. This list here. They're enough to break us.

[ 7 : 22 ] And when that happens. Just like Jesus here. The enemy goes. Bang. I'll go for that. To fight. He's always looking.

For an opportunity. But unlike Jesus. We. So easily. Let the enemy. Quietly say.

What really is God up to in your life? Little niggling line. God. Do you really understand. What I'm going through? And when it persists. It's going as far.

To say. Right Jesus. You don't know what I'm suffering here. This is awful. Why me? Why me?

We've all. We've all. Been there.

Many of us. But it may help us. To think a little different. If we take a deeper look inside. At the way. His life.

[ 8 : 19 ] Actually. Unfolded. For within. We see some things. That is easy to miss. Mary and Joseph.

Celebrated his birth. With two. Turtle doves. The gift. But. The absence of Joseph. In the adult life. Suggests. The lifestyle. Of a single parent.

Which would have meant Jesus. As the eldest. Whilst grieving. Joseph's deeply. Overburdened one. Who would. Rather than enjoy.

His childhood. Take care of the other brother. God. Figure. In the home. As the eldest. Jesus then. Endured all the pressures.

The burden of contracts. Sales. Accounts. Staff. And of course. Taxes. Jesus paid. Taxes. And lived. Government. He must have felt. So. Taken.

[ 9 : 16 ] Advantage of. I am surprised. It did not fully. Break him. There and then. And I am sure. The enemy tried. Many times. So poor.

Single. Bereaved. Depressed. Child. Can Jesus. Relate to us. Absolutely. The fight. The fight. Jesus cracks on. Into the next phase. Of his life. On earth. Recruiting his workers. Of 70 plus. Workers. All looking to him.

For daily leadership. Accounts. Balances. Restless. And everything else. That this entails. Then again. Christ.

Knows. The pressure. The work. Got so busy. So demanding. Crowds of people. Were coming. And going. That Jesus. And his disciples.

[ 10 : 12 ] Didn't even have time. To eat. Don't forget. Within all of this. The dark. Awfulness. Of death. Continues. John. The lonely place.

To grieve. And to pray. We've all been there. And yes. Jesus. And then the family. The brothers. The ones in which he. Sacrificed.

His childhood. So that they brand him a lunatic. Needs locked up. They think. They. Like the Pharisee. Someone. Tells us. That once.

With a Jewish. Festival. Approaching. The egg. Come on. Come on. Don't stone yourself. If you really are. For your sin you are. That is of course. Awful isn't it?

And I. And fall asleep. When he needs. Them. Most. And the list. Ever been. Wrongly branded. Jesus.

[ 11 : 08 ] Was branded. A drunkard. Jesus. Entire court case. Was false. Oh yes. We pray to one.

Who knows exactly. What we are facing. To purge the temple. Distraught enough. To weep in public. Weary enough. To fall asleep. In a. Executive enough.

To be burnt out. Radical enough. To get kicked out. Tempted enough. Tempted enough. To know exactly.

What we face. Every day. In our race. In our good fight. Jesus. Faced. It all. This. There will never. Ever. Ever. Never be a prayer. That we take to Jesus. Where he won't get. Where he won't. Sure I know exactly. How you feel. Never. Because he absolutely.

[12:06] And endured it. So be encouraged by this. Be very. Encouraged. And as for the continued. God. That as we press. On. We read.

Jesus. Of course. Overcame. Battle. His good fight. Would continue. But. As Luke says. Here in verse 13.

He left him. Until an opportune. Time. For Jesus. Next. Vulnerability. But these 40 days. Have taught Jesus. A lot of it.

What we go through. How Satan. All this has done. Is made Jesus. All the more determined. All the more focused. All the more dedicated. Stronger. For the fight.

For the race. For the faith. For us. For me and you. Jesus. Like. Like Rocky Balboa. Leaves. That desert. In full. Swinging.

[13:06] Fighting. Act. Jesus is thinking. If that is what Satan. does. Then humanity. Has no chance. If that is what I do to me. How will humans. Ever escape him.

Jesus is thinking. I better get in. To you. And let them all know. That I'm stronger. I'm Satan's defeater. And I will fear. Because of his.

Humanity side. He knows what we're facing. But. But. He can. Beat. Satan. And save us from him. And so as Luke.

Goes. And leaves that desert. Gets a few troops. Heads to his hometown. Nazareth. Goes right into the heart. Of the right it's on. And like the rumble in the jungle.

He stands up in Nazareth. He opens his eye. Turns to his right. I have come. The spirit of the Lord is on me. To preach good news. To the poor. To proclaim free sight.

[14:01] For the blind. Free. The oppressed. Declare God's year of favour. Bang. He may have said these words in Nazareth this day. To the people in the synagogue there.

But for sure. To the whole wide world. To everyone. To us. He said. I've just been given Satan's best. And yet hurts.

And yet vile. Blinding. It's imprisoning. So I'm offering you all. A way to escape it. And within these prayers. If ever Satan has enslaved you to.

I'll break the chain. I'll free you from it. Addicted to money. I'll set you free. He says. Enslaved to a career. A prison cell. A hostile relationship.

I'll set you free. Abuse. Anger. Jealousy. Division. I'll set you free. He says. Blinded to mercy. To joy. To peace. I'll open your eyes.

[15:01] He says. Oppressed by family. Friends. I'll set you free. Riddled in all sorts of myths. False gods. False religions.

Immoral beliefs. I'll set you free. And it's big finale. Halfway through. The original verse in Isaiah.

To make the point. Very close attention. He finishes with. If you don't know where to start. No way back. If you have no idea.

About the Bible. About God. Or whatever else. If you have no problem. Because verse 19. This. Is. God.

I. Everyone. And anyone. No matter what. It's a real. Living. Relationship. With God. Rules. Are gone. Rituals.

[15:57] Are gone. Regulations. Squandered. Religion. The curtains. Getting torn. The year. Favour. Is in. I. Categorically. From a nation. Race.

Tongue. A culture. Who said. I believe. Is saved. Is in. No matter who they've been. Everyone is simply invited. Oh indeed. Later. If you go home.

And read the rest of it. Are. What the next part is. But here at this point. Jesus manifesto. Is summed up. In two. Words. And so. Concluding his manifesto.

Everyone looks at him. The whole. Synagogue. Goes. They'll look intently. At Jesus. As he then says. By the way.

Right now. Right. In front of you. By me. The fight. Is on. Satan. Failed. To get Jesus. In the desert.

[16:52] He's now. Going to use. The. The push. They push. For a deep. Explanation. They don't like the answer. And. And God. Will use me. To reach all nations.

This message. Will go. Well. Beyond. The walls. Of Judaism. Of a simple. Carpenter. Who grew up. Amongst them. Being the one. They've become.

Vulnerable. The enemy. Opportunity. Noted. Horrible. Isn't he? He doesn't. Can't take Jesus. The next day. These guys. And look at.

How he makes them feel. Right. Unrighteous. So he reminds them. This is the carpenter's son. Don't. Important guys.

It works. They get tempted. With so much jealousy. So much need. For anger. That. That. They just want. Rid of him. They attempt to kill him. There and then. So.

[ 17 : 47 ] But not today. The fight has begun. But it won't. End. Yet. It. And Jesus. Presses on. to fight the good fight, run the race, and keep the chapter.

Tells us how Jesus goes beyond Nazareth. He goes to Capernaum and beyond. He teaches, he heals, he proclaims what we talked about. He leads, he authorizes, and the enemy, well, he, he just keeps to distort and disturb and confuse.

And Jesus keeps beating them all away. He orders them where to go. Look at each part. He went to the desert, bang, 40 days of temptation. He went to Nazareth, bang, they tried to murder him.

He didn't help feel so sorry for Jesus. It was like reading Corrie ten Boom or something. After another, after another, the enemy. Never give him rest.

I wouldn't have, none of us would have. So how did Jesus survive it? How did he do it? Verse 42. At daybreak, Jesus went out to a solitary place.

[ 18 : 57 ] Now for us as well. He writes, very early in the morning, while it was still dark, left the house and went to a solitary place where he prayed.

Jesus knew the enemy wouldn't stop. And Jesus knew he'd keep flocking to him non-stop every day.

So, to make sure he was fed, he got up when it was still dark, headed out to a lonely place, and prayed, and prayed, and prayed, and prayed, and prayed.

As soon as the sun rose, the crowds would be there. And the enemy would launch a missile. So, long before he will be in that vulnerable position, he's at prayer.

Getting all of God's protection. God's love and hugs and comfort. Getting all of God's reassurances and promises. Everything. And all of God's help to fight this good fight.

[ 19 : 59 ] We started with that question. Where are you weakest? Where are you struggling? What are you in need of?

What's depressing you? Despairing you? Sassing. Were you vulnerable? Where am I vulnerable? Because remember, just be in the desert.

Satan will go for it. So, what's the answer? The tactic? Jesus. Prayer. And how should we go about getting to prayer?

Like Rocky Balboa. Like any box. It's much better than myself. Do you not know? That in a race, all the runners get the prize. Run in such a way to get the prize.

Everyone who competes in the game, they do it to get a crown that will not last forever. Therefore, I do not run like a boxer beating the air.

[ 20 : 59 ] No. I strike a blow to my body so that after I have preached to others, I myself may not be disqualified for the prize. In here.

This is a fight. This is a race. And if we want to win, want to win. Get the mindset of the boxer within you. Get the mindset of the athlete within you.

And then do early, before dark, prayer. prayer. As all the world around you, as life is so hard, as depressions and hardships come and go, do whatever you must do, prayer.

For that's how you will win. At the root of every successful Christian. at our first staff devotions here in my first week, I ask Karen, Paul and Gerald to kneel in our leadership team.

that we here at WHBC may be fight so we kneel and pray and give God that place that we may win, that we may do with relationships with God, but also together, united as a fellowship here.

[ 22 : 09 ] Because again, Luke chapter 4. After three great, Luke launches right into chapter 4 with no time to lose.

He declares Jesus, Jesus faced the fight and Luke explains he won. He was victorious. This with us. The king knows exactly what life on earth is like here.

Because as Luke also tells us, he experienced it. And as I said earlier, we all need to go away this morning. Take this. There will never, ever, ever be a prayer that we pray where he doesn't get it.

So take everything to him. But just face it, just engage in lots and lots of prayer with him now, all the time, to find time to pray.

And then when the attack comes, just like the king's win. Let's pray. Jesus' passage to read these first three chapters.

[ 23 : 33 ] The story and the joy and the blessings, the baptism, and then all of a sudden the changes and we grieve. And you turn up in Nazareth. Demons attacking left, right, and center.

And so by the end of it, up early, before dark, in prayer. Father, help us carry that model into the week ahead. We know the enemy will attack.

We know the enemy will come for us. But we know that you're much more powerful. It's proven here in the Bible. You know how to handle Satan. You know how to put him out of business.

So help us relax and rest into that and at the very same time train ourselves to be ready for this fight, Lord. We can rest knowing you've got our backs, but within that rest we're equipped for what will happen, Lord.

So give us that, Lord, please and thank you. Bless our fellowship, Lord, our school week, our college week, and all that we face that we may live and act like you. In your name, Jesus. Amen.

[ 24 : 37 ] There's kingdom in here. The ladies are going to come and ladies and build your kingdom here. Thank you.