



Matthew: Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.' " Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.' " Jesus said to him, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.' " Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.' " Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

Mark: Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness. And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to Him.

Luke: Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry. And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.' " Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for *this* has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours." And Jesus answered and said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan! For it is

written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.' " Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you,' and, 'In *their* hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.' " And Jesus answered and said to him, "It has been said, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.' " Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.

A T Robertson - We are thus to infer that the devil returned to his attack from time to time. In the Garden of Gethsemane he tempted Jesus more severely than here. He was here trying to thwart the purpose of Jesus to go on with his Messianic plans, to trip him at the start. In Gethsemane the devil tried to make Jesus draw back from the culmination of the Cross with all its agony and horror. The devil attacked Jesus by the aid of Peter ([Mark 8:33](#)), through the Pharisees ([John 8:40](#)), besides Gethsemane ([Luke 22:42, 53](#)).

The word or idea of temptation is used in three different senses in the Bible.

- Satan, working through our own lusts, tempts us to perform evil acts — a solicitation or enticement to evil (1 Corinthians 7:5 and James 1:13-14).
- We may tempt God in the sense of wrongly putting Him to the test (Acts 5:9 and 1 Corinthians 10:9).
- God may test us, but never with a solicitation or enticement to evil (Hebrews 11:17).

The Father's plan for Jesus was for Him to suffer first, then enter His glory (Luke 24:25-26). Satan offered Jesus a way out of the suffering.

Ice-Cream Man - Little Jeff was trying his best to save money to buy his mother a present. It was a terrible struggle because he gave in so easily to the temptation to buy goodies from the ice-cream man whenever the brightly colored van came through the neighborhood. One night after his mother had tucked him in bed, she overheard him pray, "Please, God, help me run away when the ice-cream man comes tomorrow." Even at his young age he had learned that one of the best ways to overcome temptation is to avoid what appeals to our weaknesses.

Ever feel like you're in the middle of all kinds of trials? The problem with problems is that they have a tendency to drain us of our strength—physically,

emotionally, and spiritually. And that's when our adversary likes to launch his attack. When we're weak, he haunts us with thoughts like:

- How could a loving God allow this to happen?
- God has brought you to this place and has just left you here.
- Or, You're beyond help—God can't help you now.

A little boy was lying under an apple tree. The farmer asked, 'What are you trying to do? Steal an apple?' "No, sir, I'm trying not to," he replied. Many of us are trying not to, but we fail because we lie down under the apple tree. - Ray Pritchard

Notice:

- ✓ **Jesus was where God had led him.**
- ✓ **Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit.**

J Vernon McGee - Led of the Spirit- The Son of God needed to be filled with the Holy Spirit in order to meet this temptation. If He needed to be filled with the Holy Spirit in order to be able to meet the temptation, I might as well face up to the fact—and you might as well join with me—that you and I **CANNOT FACE** the temptations of this world today **IN OUR OWN STRENGTH. You and I are joined in a battle in which we are hopelessly outnumbered, and we will be miserably defeated if we go forth in our own strength and with our own ability.**

- ✓ **The devil quoted Scripture.**

Sadly, many people will accept anyone who quotes a Bible verse as if they taught God's truth, but the mere use of Bible words does not necessarily convey the will of God.

Jesus showed the only effective counter to deception: God's truth, not man's wisdom. First, we must see temptation for what it is — a lie. Then, we must combat temptation with the Word of God. Then, we must always build ourselves up in the truth, and have it in our heart.

- ✓ **The devil received his temporary position from God.**

Jesus did not need to be tempted to help Him grow. Instead, He endured temptation both so that He could identify with us (Hebrews 2:18 and 4:15), and to demonstrate His own holy, sinless character.

COMPARISON OF SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS OF EVE AND JESUS		
TEMPTATION	GENESIS 3	LUKE 4
Appeal to physical appetite	You may eat of any tree (Ge 3:1+)	You may eat by changing stones to bread (Mt 4:3-4+ , Lk 4:3-4+)
Appeal to personal gain	You surely will not die (Ge 3:4+)	You will not strike Your foot (Mt 4:6+ , Lk 4:9-12+)
Appeal to power or glory	You will be like God (Ge 3:5+)	You will have all the world's kingdoms (Mt 4:8-9+ , Lk 4:5-8+)

William MacDonald - Several additional points should be mentioned in connection with the temptation:

1. The order in Luke differs from that in Matthew. The second and third temptations are reversed; the reason for this is not clear.
2. In all three cases, the end held out was right enough, but the means of obtaining it was wrong. It is always wrong to obey Satan, to worship him or any other created being. It is wrong to tempt God.
3. The first temptation concerned the body, the second the soul, the third the spirit. They appealed respectively to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.
4. The three temptations revolve around three of the strongest drives of human existence—physical appetite, desire for power and possessions, and desire for public recognition.
5. In all three temptations, Satan used religious language and thus clothed the temptations with a garb of outward respectability. He even quoted Scripture (vv. 10, 11).

What did the actual scene look like?

➤ **THE QUESTION OF WHO YOU ARE-**

Satan didn't suggest doubt about Jesus' identity. Instead, He challenged Jesus to *display* His identity.

- **The temptation**

“If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.”

He will try to get us to distrust God's providential care and to try to solve our problems, win our struggles, and meet our needs by our own plans and in our own power.

I MUST NEVER COME UP WITH MY OWN SOLUTIONS IN DEALING WITH TEMPTATION.

The lust of the flesh

Addictions are caused by the devil attacking a person in their weakest area and the person not responding properly.

"Satan, like a fisher, baits his hook according to the appetite of the fish!"

There is a tragic irony in those words "**If You are the Son of God**," for here this address marks the **beginning** of Jesus' public ministry while the same words mark the **end** of Matthew's Gospel as He hangs on the Cross and the mockers hurl insults like "You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! **If You are the Son of God**, come down from the cross." (Mt 27:40)

- **The response**

“It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.’

We effectively resist temptation in the same way Jesus did: by countering Satan's seductive lies by shining the light of God's truth upon them. If we are ignorant of God's truth, we are poorly armed in the fight against temptation.

But He said to them, **“I have food to eat that you do not know about.”** 33 So the disciples were saying to one another, “No one brought Him anything to eat, did he?” 34 Jesus *said to them, **“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work”**. (John 4:32-34).

➤ **THE QUESTION OF POPULARITY AND POWER**

- **The temptation**

“All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.”

He will appeal to selfish ambitions and try to get us to use our own schemes to fulfill the promises God has made to us-which amounts to trying to fulfill God’s plan in Satan’s way.

I MUST NEVER MAKE DECISIONS BASED UPON WHAT I SEE.

The lust of the eyes

Ill. Westerns- people see a watering hole that isn’t in reality there. It’s only a mirage.

- **The response**

“Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.’ ”

(Isaiah 14:13-14)

Of course, ultimately, all things belong to God; but God allows Satan to function as the god of this age (2 Corinthians 4:4) for a purpose. This is why the fallen world is in the mess it is.

Ephesians 6:12

Satan’s offer, like all his offers, was a mixed bag of truth and error. Jesus later calls Satan “the ruler of this world” ([John 12:31](#); [14:30](#); [16:11](#)). Paul calls him “the god of this world” ([2 Cor. 4:4](#)). But the Bible is also clear, and Satan cleverly alludes to it even here, that God alone sets up kings and grants authority to whomever He wills ([Da 4:17, 25](#)). Satan’s authority is at best delegated and temporary. The Bible is clear, as Jesus answers, that God alone is to be worshiped and served. But Satan mixes up the truth of his powerful authority with the error of worshiping him. This is why you always have to be on guard against false teachers. Invariably they present something that is true, but they mix it up with that which is false and unbiblical. One current popular example is a man who does a great job of setting forth who we are in Christ, how we are saints. But then he states that we are not to see ourselves as sinners, but only as saints who occasionally sin. That’s dangerous error, mixed up with truth! Satan baits his hook with truth so that we swallow the whole thing. (cf the word "[secretly introduce](#)" in [2 Pe 2:1+](#)) Like a clever salesman, Satan sets out his wares without mentioning the price tag. He always shows the pleasures of sin (which are real) SEE "passing pleasures of sin" in- [Heb 11:25](#)), but he doesn’t mention the stiff consequences that inevitably follow....Satan still works that way: “Give in and enjoy the pleasures of sex like all your

friends are doing! Why deprive yourself? Life is short, this may be your only opportunity.” He doesn’t mention the risk of venereal disease (including AIDS), or pregnancy, or the spiritual and emotional consequences of giving yourself to someone outside of God’s design of lifelong marriage. He dangles before you the good feelings of taking drugs or getting drunk, but he hides the ruined lives of the drug addict or drunkard on the streets. And, of course, he never sets before you [the eternal wrath of God!](#)([The Temptation of Jesus](#))

([Hebrews 4:15](#))

Satan is *the ruler of this world* ([John 12:31](#)) and *the prince of the power of the air* ([Ephesians 2:2](#)).

One day, it will be said that *The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever* ([Revelation 11:15](#)). Satan offered this to Jesus now, before the agony of the cross.

(Heb. 4:14–16)

➤ **THE QUESTION OF FAITH AND TRUST OF GOD**

• **The temptation**

“If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. For it is written: ‘He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you,’ and, ‘In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.’”

He will try to get us to presume on God’s care and forgiveness by willingly putting ourselves in the way of danger-whether physical, economic, moral, spiritual, or any other.

I MUST NEVER MEASURE SUCCESS BY PERFORMANCE.

The pride of life

The **pinnacle** or highest point of the **temple** is thought by most writers to probably be the top of what was known as Herod's royal portico at the southeast corner which is directly over a cliff overlooking the Kidron Valley some 450 ft below.

Several writers such as D A Carson say the devil did not actually misquote [Psalm 91:11-12](#), but others like Wiersbe and Spurgeon do not agree. Robertson does add that the devil "**misapplies** it and makes it mean presumptuous reliance on God."

This warns us against demanding something spectacular from God to prove His love or concern for us. He has already given the ultimate demonstration of His love for us at the cross ([Romans 5:8](#)), and He can do nothing more "spectacular" than that.

- **The response**

"It has been said, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.' "

The reference alludes to [Exodus 17:2-7](#) (cf. [Nu 20:1-13](#)), where the Israelites "put the Lord to the test" by demanding water. So Jesus was tempted by Satan to test God, but Jesus recognized Satan's testing as a sort of manipulative bribery expressly forbidden in the Scriptures (cf. Robinson, Twelve New Testament Studies, 54-56)

Jesus points out to the devil that *testing God is not trusting God.*"

Remember how in the vision of the rich man and the poor man Lazarus in their rewards, and the rich man asked Abraham for Lazarus to be sent to his family to warn them, thinking that they would believe if one came back from the dead? The answer was, "If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets [Scripture], they will not be convinced even if one rises from the dead" (Luke 16:31).

When Jesus suffered on the cross ([Mt 27:41-44](#)), those who tormented Him used arguments similar to that of the Devil: "If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." They even quoted [Ps 22:8](#) to argue that Jesus would be rescued if God really loved Him, much as Satan quoted [Ps 91:11-12](#) to argue that God would rescue Jesus from a deadly fall if He were really God's Son. Again, Jesus knew better. **He trusted God even through a brutal scourging, even when nails were driven through His limbs, and even when God let Him suffer a horrible death.**

The Son of God can live only in a relationship of trust which needs no test." (France)

"The angelic help of [Psalm 91:11](#), which Jesus refused to call for illegitimately, is now appropriately given. *Ministered* implies particularly the provision of food, and again the experience of Elijah seems to be recalled ([1 Kings 19:5-8](#))." (France)

It is important to realize that by not giving heed to the devil, Jesus receives the very blessings which Satan had held out to him. However, it is in a far more glorious sense and with the Father's favor resting upon him that he receives the strength to endure physically, the ministry of the angels, and authority over the kingdoms of the world. (Baker NTC-Matthew)

Then the devil left Him means that Jesus won. He won because He recognized Satan's mode of attack: lies and deception. Primarily, Satan is a deceiver, and for those who live in light of the cross, deception is his only tool, because demonic powers were disarmed at the cross of their "real" weapons and power ([Colossians 2:15](#)). (spoil-disarm). But deception is extremely effective at leading us into sin, and at causing us to live lives of fear and unbelief.

A little girl was asked if Satan ever tempted her to do wrong. "Oh, yes," she replied, "but when he knocks at the door of my heart, I just pray, 'Lord Jesus, please go to the door for me!'" "What happens then?" she was asked. "Oh, everything turns out all right. When Satan sees Jesus, he runs away every time!" In her simple faith, that little girl realized that even the strongest Christian is no match for the devil. Only Jesus has defeated him, so we must be strong in the strength of our Lord.

Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

and the angels ministered to Him.

Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.

"These holy beings might not come upon the scene while the battle was being fought, lest they should seem to divide the honors of the day; but when the duel was ended, they hastened to bring food for the body, and comfort for the mind of the champion King." (Spurgeon)