

Temptations

by Leon Morris

Jesus' experience with temptation shows us what a genuine humanity can be, and we can learn from His example to overcome our own struggles.

Scripture: Luke 22:44, Hebrews 4:14

Topics: "Temptation", "Jesus as Our Example"

Description

Leon Morris emphasizes the reality of Jesus' temptations, particularly illustrated by His agony in Gethsemane, where He experienced profound struggle and emotional turmoil. He argues that Jesus' sinlessness does not diminish the intensity of His temptations; rather, it highlights His true humanity and the depth of His resistance. Morris points out that yielding to temptation does not reveal its full power, and only those who resist can truly understand its weight. Jesus' victory over temptation serves as a model for us, showing that His moral life is filled with genuine worth and struggle. We are encouraged to approach Jesus, our high priest, with confidence, knowing He understands our weaknesses and offers grace in our times of need.

Transcript

The reality of Jesus' temptations is highlighted by the story of Gethsemane. There we read that He was "in an agony" and that "His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Lk. 22:44). It makes no sense of this to say that there was no real struggle. . . The story is meaningless unless Jesus wrestled with a real temptation.

It is true that Jesus' experience lacked one element of ours, namely, the consciousness of past sin. But this does not mean that He was not tempted. . . We must not make the mistake of taking our imperfect lives as the standard, and regarding Christ as human only as He conforms to our failures. He is the standard, and He shows us what a genuine humanity can be.

"The resistance of temptation may be torture to a good man, whereas a bad man yields easily." The man who yields to a particular temptation has not felt its full power. He has given in while the temptation has yet something in reserve. Only the man who does not yield to a temptation who, as regards that particular temptation, is sinless, knows the full extent of that temptation. Thus Jesus, the sinless One, is the only one who really knows the full extent of temptation's power, and He knows it precisely because He did not yield. . . Christ's temptations must have been of an intensity inconceivable to us.

To think of Jesus as going serenely through life's way with never a ripple of real temptation is to disturb Him, even to empty His moral life of real worth, and to prevent us from seeing in Him our Example. His sinlessness did not result from some automatic necessity of His nature as much as from His moment-by-moment committal of Himself to the Father. He overcame. But it was a real victory, over real temptation.

Since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16).

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/leon-morris/temptations/>

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