

God's Word Settled the Matter for Jesus

by Sandeep Poonen

Sandeep Poonen emphasizes the importance of God's Word in overcoming temptation, using Jesus as the ultimate example of obedience and reliance on Scripture.

Duration: 23:48

Scripture: 1 Peter 2

Topics: "Biblical Obedience", "Temptation Victory"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the secret to overcoming every temptation of sin by following the example of Jesus, who overcame every temptation by the word of God. It highlights the importance of settling in our hearts what God's word says and obeying it without negotiation or excuses. The sermon also stresses the need for good teachers of God's word to guide us in handling the Scriptures correctly and the significance of being radically submitted to God's word out of love for Him.

Transcript

We've heard a very consistent theme, I think, through all that we've heard about having a life that is a life of action. So I just wanted to add to that from what I would prepare to share myself. I was thinking this week about wouldn't it be great to know the secret to overcoming every temptation of sin.

We talk so much about victory over sin, we talk about the only thing serious is sin. What is the secret to overcoming every temptation of every sin? We don't need to guess what the secret is because we know the one who didn't sin, who was tempted in all points just as we are, it says in the Bible. So we don't need to guess the secret, we just need to go and look at the one who did it, and that's Jesus.

And we study the life of Jesus and we see how he was able to overcome every single sin and Jesus says, follow me, follow in my footsteps. Who committed no sin, that's 1 Peter chapter 2, follow in his footsteps who committed no sin. If I want to know the secret of how to overcome every sin, I just need to look at the life of Jesus.

And if we look in Luke chapter 4, Jesus is tempted by the devil. And he is tempted, and the Bible talks about three temptations that Jesus faces. Now it actually says in Luke chapter 4 verse 1 that he was tempted for 40 days.

He was not being repeatedly tempted with the same three temptations every day. He was being tempted in a myriad of different temptations. But these three temptations are representative of the temptations that, all the temptations that he faced.

You can see that these temptations correlate with what in 1 John it says, the lust of this world, which is the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. Summarized in these three temptations. So we can look at these temptations as being representative of all the kind of temptations that people will go through, and all the temptations that Jesus went through.

And I'm not here to go into the details of what he was tempted in, but just to draw a very simple truth that you probably all know about the secret of how Jesus overcame every temptation. He overcame every single temptation by the word of God. That's it.

Every single temptation he overcame by saying it is written. Every single one of them. Not 99% of them, not 50% of them, every single temptation he said it is written.

Now in his case, he didn't even need to say it is written, because who wrote it? He did it. He himself wrote it. And anything he spoke, anything Jesus spoke, was the word of God, because he was also fully God.

So he didn't need to say it is written. Why did he say it is written? To be an example for me. He didn't come to show you how he can walk on water, he came to show you how we can swim in the water.

And he can say, now you too can swim. He didn't come to show us how we can go from here to another place by flying over it, he showed us how to get there the way humans do, are supposed to do. That's why he came fully God and fully man, so that he could show us the way how to be tempted but not sin.

That was Jesus. Tempted in all points, but never sinned. How did he overcome every single temptation? It is written.

We too have his word. We too have the word of God. And we too need to find it is written for every single temptation.

And we read in this passage that not only is it is written, it is also written. Because even the devil can quote scripture to us and lead us astray. That is why it's very important for us to be taught of God's word.

It is very important, dear brothers and sisters, for every single one of us to know if we are being taught. And if your teacher is a good teacher. And there are a lot of us, a lot of us Christians in the world who can tend to think I don't need a teacher, I've got the Holy Spirit.

But that's contrary to God's word, because God's word says he has given to the church teachers. I don't treat my children this way, where I just say to my children, yeah, you can just go, you know, study, you got Google, got YouTube, go figure it out. I send them to a school.

And you know what I'm asking about the school? I don't ask them how big is the playground? Do you have great state of the art facility? I'm not asking even about that. You know what I'm asking? How good are their teachers? How good is the teacher you have? We won't allow our children to go to secondary teachers. How good is the teacher you have? And then with the teacher you have, are you listening to them? Are you obeying them what they say? I'll tell my children to obey their teachers.

Are you obeying what the teachers of God for you are? Is it making a difference? If it isn't making a difference, I don't think they are your teacher. I think you're claiming them to be the teacher, but they're not your teacher. But it's God's word that the good teacher will also teach from.

We're never worshipping our teacher, we're worshipping God and his word. And God's word is what is well understood by a good teacher. So let us remember that the way to overcome every single temptation is by the well-handled word of God.

I don't want to just say by the word of God, because we can cut and paste all the wrong verses for the wrong situation. As we've heard it said, we could use the word of God to excuse almost pretty much any sin you want to do if you really want to find a way to do it right. That's why you need a good teacher.

You need good instructors who can tell you how to handle this very sharp sword that is called the word of God. You need a good instructor. If you don't, you can read the Bible and you'll have the Holy Spirit, but you won't make the kind of progress we were supposed to make.

But if we're taught well and we obey the teachings, then we will grow. That's how our children grow in education. It's not going to be any different.

It is by knowing God's word and it is by obeying God's word. When temptation comes to me, when any temptation comes to me, dear brothers and sisters, you have to ask yourself, what does God's word say and settle at it. That's what Jesus did.

Jesus settled with it, with saying, it doesn't matter what I feel. It doesn't matter what my stomach feels like after 40 days of fasting. It doesn't matter what my stomach feels like.

I know what God has said to me in his word in this particular situation. This was not some random word that God picked, that Jesus picked. It was a word that Jesus went to the father about.

Lord, should I eat today? And I believe Jesus went to the father every day after the 10th day of fasting. Father, should I eat today? And the father said, live on my word. Okay.

And I'm saying no need. And on the 39th day and on the 40th day, it was the same. He went to the father, not because it was some rule.

There was no law he was obeying. He went to the father and said, Lord, should I eat today? Father said, no, you shouldn't eat today. You should live by my word.

And so when the devil came and said, come on, turn the stone into bread. Jesus said, no, it is written because I know what God's word told me. We need to have God's word really being the reason by which we obey God and overcome sin.

Why am I saying this? Because there's a great tendency, I think, in all of us to either not believe we can overcome sin and so live in defeat, not know that we need to keep going to God's word for the way in which we can overcome sin. Jesus was much stronger than all of us, but he still needed God's word. We need to know God, what is your word to help me in this trial today? I need a word from you today for this trial that's there.

This doesn't come from 15 minutes quiet time in the morning. This is a lifestyle. It's a lifestyle that I must live that says, God, I want to be constantly submitted to your word.

And what I learned from this in Jesus's life was he settled it because God said it. So when he was a little child, when he was a 10 year old, he knew the verse that was applicable to him, which was obey your parents, honor your parents and obey your parents in the Lord. That settled it for him.

He didn't have to argue with his parents. He didn't have to try to debate and grumble about it with his father. No, God's word has said it.

It is settled. I must obey my parents and that prepared him for when he was 30 years old and God told him to do something else. It was settled.

Is it settled in my life? That's the question. When God says, now let's make it practical. When God says, be anxious for nothing.

Is it settled? God's word has said it. In everything, make your request known to God. That's what he says.

Don't go down the road of anxiety. Go down the road of going to God. Rejoice always in the Lord.

Is it settled? God has said it to me. That's it. I don't have any trouble understanding it.

I've been taught by a good teacher. What that really means is to rejoice in every circumstance. Not to grumble and murmur, but is it settled? Done.

God said it. I must do it. No leeway for, well, you know how hard a day I had? Do you know what she said to me? Do you know what he did to me? So now the word of God becomes negotiable.

That's not how Jesus overcame every single sin. It is written. The devil tempted Eve and had a different result with Eve because he reasoned with Eve.

Look at the fruit. See how beautiful it is. Take your feelings into account.

Look how this will make you wise. And he engaged in conversation. Well, this is special situations.

Be anxious for nothing is, you know, I mean, it's normal when the AC is okay, it's working, then be anxious for nothing. But when the bank account is getting low, then, well, that's special situations. With Jesus, it was settled.

And that was the starting point from which he said, Lord, it is settled. Now, Lord, how do I get there? And I want us to remember that God's word must commands, God's commands must become final. Let's not argue.

Let's not negotiate. Let's not debate. That's where we have a good teacher to help us.

You pick your teacher, pick a good teacher of God's word who knows how to handle God's word. God doesn't tell everybody you can just understand God's word and you can teach it. God's given to the church teachers, find a good teacher, but then submit to that teacher.

And if that teacher says, rejoice, always rejoice, always then we must say, Lord, that's it's written. I'm not going to negotiate anymore with you. This is how we conquer every sin by first settling in our hearts.

This is what God says. It is clear in my mind about it. That's no more negotiation point.

No more excuses. That's the starting point. Now let me interact with my failure.

Let me interact with my feelings. Let me interact with my coworkers or family members that are causing disruptions to it. But God's command, it is settled.

I must obey that decision and that determination, that desire must be in us. It is written. And we find that even though we take some verses seriously, we can say, Oh, you look, I'm going to be a woman who covers her head when she comes to church.

But because there, you know, 1 Corinthians 11 says that, but let your mouth be filled with grace. Well, that's only normal circumstances. Not when my husband gets at me, then I'll, then my tongue can be filled with some other kind of spirit.

But I excuse out God's word because I don't, haven't seen the life of Jesus who said it is written. It is written. Let your speech always be filled with grace.

It is written. And there's a seriousness and there's an action as we heard today associated with it that we must have. This is how we conquer every sin.

First, settling what God's word has said about it. Let that be the starting point. But I also want to add one more thing to it.

In John 5, verse 19 and 20, Jesus had such a reverence for God's word. Jesus had such a reverence. Now, again, I'm going to repeat one more time.

We just don't take God's word blindly and obey it. We must be taught of God's word. And Jesus didn't need to be taught of God's word.

He obeyed him and listened to the father perfectly. We need to be taught of God's word. So we must submit to the well taught word of God.

But we must be so radically submitted to God's word that it says in John 5, 19, the son of man does nothing of himself. Everything that he hears the father doing. So I can translate that for us today.

Everything that we know that the word of God has been taught to us to do, we do it. Everything that we know a good teacher has taught us, you must live this way. This is what this verse means.

And our heart confirms that. Yes, that's right. That sounds exactly what it must do or must be.

Then the life that Jesus lives is, I don't do anything on my own. I just do what is written. I do nothing else.

But I wanted to end with a word of encouragement with what it says in verse 20. The motivation for why we are able to live this way is in verse 20. It says, because the reason Jesus said, you know why I don't do anything on my own initiative is because the father loves the son.

That's what it says in verse John 5, 20. Because I know that God loves me infinitely, I am going to take whatever he says and follow it down to the T. No arguments, no debates, because I know the father loves me. That's the motivation.

This is not yoga. This is not life of empty self-denial. It is because the father loves the son.

That is why I don't live a life of adultery, as we heard. James chapter 4 verse 4. With God and the world. With God and my feelings.

With God and my own agenda too. That's adultery. God, everything you say, except on Friday night, except what movies I watch, except what friends I hang out with, except what music I listen to.

God, you really are God. You died for me. I want to go to church often on Sundays.

Yes, Lord, I want to go to Bible studies, but just not that. God says that's adultery. It's just like, how would you look at it if somebody was committing adultery? God and somebody else, and something else that you won't submit and say, God, you can have it.

And that's a beautiful verse that we heard from Paul, James chapter 4 verse 5. He jealously desires the spirit with which he has made to dwell in us. What does that mean? I don't know all that it means. Here's how I understood it, and here's how I want to explain just a little part of that verse.

The father up in heaven jealously desires the Holy Spirit who's in me. There was a connection that the father and the son had when they were in heaven, and that connection was still the same when he was here on earth. But the son and the father always maintain that connection, even though the father and the son were together for all eternity up in heaven like this.

Flowing love, flowing, the infinite procession of love is what somebody has called it, between the father and the son. Then the son comes down to earth and becomes a human, but there's still that procession of love back and forth between the father and the son, where the father and the son were in perfect unity throughout, even though the distance was much greater. And it's in that context that I see this verse and then now says, the spirit, he's also part of the eternity, he dwells in you now.

And the father jealously desires that same infinite flow of love back and forth between the spirit in you and the father. The spirit has been in heaven for all eternity, having that procession of love between the father, son, and Holy Spirit. Now the Holy Spirit has come to live in me, and just like Jesus was on this earth and that infinite flow of love went back and forth, now the Holy Spirit's living in us.

And God is saying, I jealously desire this, this is me, I put inside of you, and I jealously desire that flow back and forth. That's why it's a big deal when God says, I've given you the Holy Spirit to live in you, because the father now jealously desires him. But you adulterers, you adulteresses, trying to add the word, trying to add the world into your heart too.

You won't take me at my word. And there's this great love that I have for you, and I jealously long to be united. When the spirit within me is united with the father up above, what is flowing? What is that thing that's flowing between the father and the spirit inside of me? Love, because God is love.

And God jealously desires for that love to be poured out on me. That happened in the life of Jesus, to where Jesus then said, I have this constant flow of love between the father and son. That is why I don't do anything of my own initiative.

That's why nobody else can come and compete with God being on the throne. I do nothing on my own initiative. What he did for Jesus, he wants to do for you too.

That's why he sent his spirit. He sent his spirit to live in us. And those of us who claim to be born again, it says we're born of the spirit.

Well, if you say you're born again and you say you're a Christian and the Holy Spirit has been birthed in you, well, then that's God. And the father up in heaven wants that love, that connection between the father and the Holy Spirit to be connected in our lives, so that it could be an outpouring of love in our lives. So that we will take him at his word.

So when we find ourselves not obeying, when we find ourselves not radically obeying, not having some actions we can work on, you know what the problem is? The problem is not that you're not strong enough. The problem is the Holy Spirit and the father are not connected in love. The Holy Spirit within you has not been wholly connected with the father-in-law.

Restore the connection of love between the father and the Holy Spirit inside of you. And then it says, you too will become like Jesus where you say, I can't do anything on my own initiative because I've been so gripped by this infinite love. May God help us.

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