

# Lessons From the Temptation of Jesus

by Timothy Tow

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*The sermon explores the temptations of Jesus and the lessons we can learn about resisting temptation through faith and Scripture.*

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 8:3, Proverbs 9:17, Matthew 4:1, Matthew 6:33, John 6:37, 1 Timothy 6:6, Hebrews 2:18, James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:8

**Topics:** "Temptation And Sin", "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

Timothy Tow preaches on the temptations faced by Jesus in the wilderness, highlighting the importance of using God's Word as a weapon against the Devil's schemes. He emphasizes the need for Christians to be well-versed in the Bible to effectively resist temptation and rely on Jesus, the Living Word, for strength and protection. The sermon draws parallels between the temptations faced by Jesus and common temptations in modern society, warning against the dangers of greed, arrogance, and seeking success through illegitimate means.

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## Transcript

Text: Matt 4:1-11

Jesus, though the Son of God, is also the Son of Man. He is both God and Man. As Man, like any one of us, He will meet with temptations, but he is the Sinless One.

Thus, after His baptism, the Spirit led Him to the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil. He must be tested further before entering His public ministry to work out God's Saving Plan for us.

Who is the Tempter? He is the Devil, Satan, the father of lies, a murderer from the beginning, and a roaring lion. As a roaring lion he will accuse you falsely in a frontal attack. Satan launched a full-scale attack on the Chinese Church and put countless Christians into prison. Wang Ming-tao, China's No. 1 saint, was sentenced to 23 years' imprisonment.

Now, we must never give way to Satan. God's Word says we must resist him. Our weapon of resistance is the Word of God, the sword of the Spirit. When Satan tempted Jesus to turn stone into bread in order to relieve hunger Jesus quoted Deut 8:3, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." When tempted in the second and third counts Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy again to repel him. Do you have God's Word which you can use effectively in a second,

against your enemy? How much of the Bible do you know? Are you a constant Bible reading Christian?

Not only must you use God's Written Word to repel the enemy, you have Jesus the Living Word to shelter you from temptation. Our Lord is our shield from temptation. Heb 2:18 says, "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Jesus knows our weaknesses and can sympathise with us, even when we fall. "And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (Jn 6:37).

The temptation our Lord went through and the temptation our first parents went through are beyond comparison. The latter took place in the Garden of Eden with plentiful supply of food. The former took place in a howling wilderness barren of any sustenance. It was of 40 days and nights duration, like Moses on the Mount. It was a grave undertaking.

Now the first temptation was on man's basic physical need. Satan suggested to our Lord to turn stone into bread. Whatever Satan says will lead us to death, for he was a murderer in the beginning. Stone changed into bread may taste sweet in the mouth but becomes bitter when it enters the stomach. Stone changed into bread but in no time bread returns to stone.

I had a Malay friend in the Supreme Court who was a cashier. One day he was tempted to take from the Supreme Court safe \$2,000. He wanted to make a fast buck in horseracing. Instead of winning, he lost it all. It resulted in his imprisonment.

A most startling illustration is an SIA officer who embezzled \$35 million from the Airline. His crime was discovered recently and he was sent to prison. The millions he stashed away had to be returned. "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell" (Prov 9:17,18).

The second temptation is on man's overweening spirit. Satan leads Christ to the holy city and sets him on a pinnacle of the temple. "And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone" (Matt 4:6). This is Satan quoting Scripture or rather misquoting Scripture. He used this verse to tempt Christ to some sensational show off. So does Satan tempt our overweening, arrogant spirit to display some sensational achievements.

When China began to open her market to the world many Singaporeans took great risks to invest there. Instead of making gains they lost out heavily. The Suzhou project by our Government is a case in point.

But the Scripture teaches Christians that godly contentment is great gain. "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil. . ." (I Tim 8:6-10).

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt 6:33).

Many young couples these days aspire to the 5C's. They overcommit themselves to the luxuries of life and burden themselves with paying interest to no end. They go the way of the world. If they would serve the Lord first and live within their means, God will send them more than enough to meet their every need.

The last temptation is to cause us to fall from over achievements through illegitimate means. Worship me (bend to my evil ways) and I will give all the powers of earthly realm to you. We can worship God only, not Satan. Moreover what promise Satan offers us is a lie. He is the father of lies.

Often we read of tycoons who suddenly disappear from the scene. They are caught for insider trading, or infringing some other financial laws, or evading income tax.

The case of German Chancellor Kohl's falling from decades of princely rule over Germany is notorious. He is now exposed for using illegitimate funds during his political career. We have a good Government and we have a duty to pray for our Government that they will govern righteously.

God has prospered Christians in business. Do rich Christians know how to use their financial power to promote God's Kingdom? Or are they tempted to get rich by fair means or foul and leave God out? Beware, lest you fall. When much money comes into your hands, do you perform your duty honestly and meticulously as a good trustee or are you like the SIA employee mentioned earlier who yielded to Satan's offers that led to his downfall?

These are lessons we must learn from the temptations of Jesus. Amen.

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