



THE BIBLE SAYS

OCTOBER 16/17

YIELD TO NOT TEMPTATION

PART 2

MATTHEW 4:5-7 (NIV)

A SERMON BY REV. DR. HOWARD-JOHN WESLEY

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MOVING FROM CROWD TO COMMUNITY

Sunday, October 17, 2021

Preacher: Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley

Sermon: "The Bible Says , Yield Not to Temptation, Part 2

Scripture: Matthew 4:5-7 (NIV)

CURRICULUM GUIDE



Sermon Summary

In the second temptation of Jesus, noted in Matthew 4:5-7, the enemy, Satan, takes Jesus to the Holy City and to the top of the Temple. Pastor Wesley juxtaposed the place where the tempter takes Jesus in Matthew 4:5-7 to the place the Holy Spirit takes him in Matthew 4:1. The Holy Spirit takes Jesus to a deserted and solitary place, the wilderness. Conversely, the devil takes Jesus to a high and lifted up place, atop the Temple, the place of religious power and prestige in Jerusalem. The deceiver tempts Jesus to jump off of the pinnacle of the Temple, assuring him that angels will keep him safe. Jesus responds by saying we should not test God.

Key Points

1. Jesus, your Savior, has experienced everything you will endure. And you, as his follower, will endure everything he experienced. Given this, you should expect there will be temptations in your life that you have to endure.
2. As you grow into the fullness of God's intentions for you, you will have to engage the temptations that come into your life. The grace that comes to you is that, in Christ, you are made able meet the temptations and by his power in us to overcome them.
3. 3 knows how to use his power to elevate people. But, it is important for us to remember that not everyone who ends up at the top of a business, an academic institution or even the church is aligned with the will of God. Some folks go to that place by obeying Satan instead of following God. One question worthy of asking yourself is, would you rather be successful with Satan, or would you choose to struggle with God?
4. In this world evil will prosper, but evil will not be blessed. Remember, the difference between prospering and blessings. Prospering is about what you have. Blessings are about who has you.

Key Points (cont.)

5. Don't be fooled just because someone has a religious title. looks holy or can quote scripture. Sometimes people have scripture in their mouths at the same moment they have Satan in their hearts. Just because someone has memorized scripture, that does not mean they are using it rightly or that they are aligned with the will of God.
6. The phrase, "The Bible Says" has been weaponized and co-opted to oppress communities of people throughout Christian history. Paul has been quoted to deny women a leadership role in church (2 Timothy 2:12). Those writing in Paul's name have been used to legitimate the heinous institution of chattel slavery (Colossians 3:22). And the Torah has been applied as a bludgeon to eliminate LGBTQIA brothers and sisters from the family of God (Leviticus 18:22, 20:17). Just because someone says "The Bible says" does not make it true.
7. In fact, whenever someone quotes the Bible to you, it is vital that you ask yourself the following:
 - a. Was the passage quoted correctly? Each believer should open their Bibles for themselves and ask, did the spokesperson add or subtract from God's word? Did he conveniently edit something?
 - b. Was the passage quoted in context? Does it align with the verses that proceed it, follow it? Does it align with the chapter prior, the chapter that follows?
 - c. And, does it align with the ministry of Jesus' life, the meaning of his death and the message of the resurrection? Is the speaker interpreting the text through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus?

Key Points (cont):

8. Jesus tells Satan at the end of this text, that you must not test God. God has already proved the Divine self to us. He has given us life, he has kept us thus far, he has loved us with an everlasting love. He has died for us and risen to new life, so that we might do the same. God is faithful and no test can prove that any more so that God's love for us.

. And, faith is no excuse for foolishness. Satan tempts Jesus to jump off of the Temple's spires inviting him into a foolish act while telling him faith will keep him safe. Faith leads us to a sound mind and a sound mind and faith are not mutually exclusive. You can and must use our sound minds as you live out your life of faith.

Getting To Know You Questions:

1. Pastor Wesley asked a poignant question early in this sermon, would you rather succeed with Satan or struggle with God? What happened when you heard that question? What did you think? Have you ever faced a decision when the "successful" path was not the godly path? What did you learn from that moment?

2. Pastor Wesley described an encounter with a person who declared that his faith led him to avoid being vaccinated. This person quoted scripture (II Corinthians 5:7 and II Timothy 1:7), out of context. Have you ever had an experience of someone misquoting scripture in order to make their point? How did that make you feel? What did you do?

. When someone says to you, "The Bible says" what is your reaction? Have you had an experience of someone using the Bible against you to make their point?





Into The Bible Questions:

1. What do you think Jesus meant when he said do not put God to the test? What kind of tests can you place before the Creator of all things? Are there ways that humans test God? Have you ever tested God? If so, how?
2. Satan has been around a long time, and makes his first Biblical appearance in the book of Job (Job 1:6). Because of his proximity to God, Satan would have known that God had been, and continued to, bless his followers. As Jesus quotes Moses, he tells Satan, "Do not test the Lord, your God." This statement underscores Satan's ultimate subjection to God. This is further confirmed in Revelation (20:7-10) where we learn of Satan's ultimate demise. If you trust that, ultimately, Satan is subjected to God and will be defeated, how might that shift his power to speak into your life and deceive you?



Life Application Questions:

When we were students in school, tests caused us to study and often helped us learn.

1. Can you think of a time in your life when a test of faith caused you to “study” and “learn”? What did you learn? Did what you learned impact your life?
 2. Has the idea of a ‘testing’ shown up in your walk with God? This week, during your devotional time, reflect on any areas of your life where you feel a test may be brewing or active. How can you invite God into this area of your life?
- . In this sermon, Pastor Wesley noted that Jesus had to remind Satan that he is under the subjugation of God. Recently, what have you had to declare is under the subjugation of God?



"Can I Push It?"

Pastor warned us that the tempter knows how to put people at the top of religion and that it is possible for someone to be rising in religion and growing in church and having authority over people but having arrived there and not be with God.

Have you ever been intimidated or blindly followed someone because they have a religious title, or they're passionate, or they're convicted, or they've been in church longer than you, or their Bible is bigger than yours, or they know all the third verses of the hymns?

Activity:

What are some of the ways God has blessed you? Write a list or name the ways God has brought you out in the past. If you choose to make a written list, keep it close at hand, place it where you will see it daily (in your planner, on your bathroom mirror, on your nightstand, refrigerator, etc.). If you choose to name your blessing, speak it out loud. Pick one that you want to repeat over and over throughout the week. The next time you begin to doubt God, or want to test God, bring out and read or speak the list aloud as a record of God's work in your life.

The hymn, Great Is Thy Faithfulness, was written by a man who suffered ill health most of his adult life. Though a minister by profession, his health limited his income. Of this circumstance, Thomas Obediah Chisholm, the hymn writer said, "God has given me many wonderful displays of his providing care, which have filled me with astonishing gratefulness." He seems to be one who counted his blessings and now we are blessed by this hymn of the church. Listen to this rendition, by Donnie McClurkin, who once was told that continuing to sing would do harm to his voice. Yet, he continues to praise God. Great Is Thy Faithfulness https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNiKt_5WH-8

Spirit Work:

Our Jewish brothers and sisters sing a song during Passover to remind themselves of all God has done for them. The song is entitled, Dayenu (Die eh new). Roughly translated, dayenu means "it would have been enough", "it would have been sufficient", or "it would have sufficed". Here are the stanzas of the song.

<https://youtu.be/hVvXMQzdohk?t=11>(Passover song)

Five stanzas of leaving slavery

If He had brought us out of Egypt.

If He had executed justice upon the Egyptians.

If He had executed justice upon their gods.

If He had slain their first-born.

If He had given to us their health and wealth.

Dayenu

Five stanzas of miracles

If He had split the sea for us.

If He had led us through on dry land.

If He had drowned our oppressors.

If He had provided for our needs in the wilderness for 40 years.

If He had fed us manna.

Five stanzas of being with God

If He had given us Shabbat.

If He had led us to Mount Sinai.

If He had given us the Torah.

If He had brought us into the Land of Israel.

If He built the Temple for us.

Dayenu

Spirit Work: (cont)

1. As God's people who believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, God has gone so far beyond these 15 stanzas. If you were going to write a few more lines to this poem, what would you add to the list of God's blessings that have been more than enough?
2. Using your favorite Bible app, or other resources, locate three of your favorite passages that describe what the Bible says about you as a child of God. Create an image that reminds you of this scripture, and place it when you can see it on a regular basis.

Additional Questions for Married Couples:

1. Temptations arise in every marriage. Have temptations faced by you and/or your spouse caused you to move away from God, or come closer to God, both?
2. The Bible Says, is the title of this week's sermon. Are there scriptures in the Bible that describe the type of love you wish to have in marriage? What are they? Write them down and read them to one another as blessings to each other during the week.

Additional Questions for Young Adults:

1. In a world where social media prescribes what success should look like, how would you describe success, as it is described in the Bible? What are the differences and similarities between social media's definition of success and God's?
2. What proof do you have that God has shown up for us in our daily lives? How can you continually notice, and praise, the day to day instances where God proves Godself?
3. In your mobile device's weekly report of your screen time, what apps do you find are taking up the most hours of your time? How can you use your screen time this week to give attention to "God Moments", moments when God comes through on your behalf?

Additional Questions for Parents:

Pasor stated that you need not test God because She cares for us. How comfortable are you with allowing God and God's people to care for you, and to help you when you need it?

Do your children test you, even though you've proven yourselves to be faithful in caring for them? If so, do you experience frustration? If yes, how do you deal with it? If no, why not?

Is parenting a holy assignment or a gift from God? Can you practice both parenting and spirituality in a way that honors God?

Additional Questions for Women:

1. Pastor referenced Jesus' using his discernment to overcome temptation. What does it look like for you to use your discernment? Has it grown your faith?
2. In this week's sermon, we learned that Jesus faced pressure to believe misquoted scripture. The contextual misuse of scripture has caused some women to experience pressure to believe something that is a misrepresentation of biblical texts, such as what the Bible does or does not say about proper attire for church attendance. How might these types of pressures show up in your walk with God?

Additional Questions for Men:

Pastor Wesley said that you do not need to test God because God has proven that She is faithful, ever present, caring for all of creation. As a man, how comfortable are you with allowing God to care for you? How comfortable are you being a care-giver? Does anything about your identity as a man or otherwise impact the way you receive or give care?

Pastor noted that you will face temptations in your life. As you look back over your life, can you recall a time you faced temptation as a man of God.? Did your faith guide you? Did you overcome the temptation? What did you learn from this experience?

An “ethical will” is the passing on of wisdom to the generations that follow you. As a man of God, what have you learned from your tests and how will you pass that wisdom on to those, younger than you, who look up to you?

This Week’s Sermon Biblical References

Matthew 4:5-7

Luke chapter 4

Psalms 91:11-12

Deuteronomy 6

Further Study, Terms and Resources

Great is Thy Faithfulness. Lyricist: Thomas Obadiah Chisholm. (1866–1960) with Music composed by William M. Runyan (1870–1957) in Baldwin City, Kansas. Published: 1923 by Hope Publishing. Based on Lamentations 3:23.

For more information on the concept of an ethical will see.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-importance-of-writing-an-ethical-willfor-you-and-to-those-you-love-01605631733>