

Temptation of Christ



Genesis 3:1-24 1 Peter 5:8-11 Mark 1:9-13

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Jesus begins His public ministry at His Baptism. In a spectacular Trinitarian display¹, Jesus is baptized as the Savior of the world, the One chosen² to take our sins to the cross where He will suffer and die for us and our salvation.

The first thing that happens after Jesus' Baptism, is that Jesus is **CAST OUT**³ by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. Jesus is **DRIVEN** into the wilderness to face Satan alone. The word that the Gospel of Mark uses is a **STRONG AND VIOLENT WORD**.

→ Jesus is **CAST OUT** like Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden after they sinned. Jesus is the **New Adam**, representing all of us, as He is tempted by Satan for 40 days. Unlike Adam, Jesus **will not** believe Satan and **will not** disobey God's Word and fall into sin.

¹ Jesus' Baptism is the only recorded Trinitarian public display in the history of the world. God the father speaks from heaven, God the Holy Spirit descends in the form of a dove, and God the son Jesus Christ is standing in the water as John the Baptist baptizes Him. The story is recorded in Matthew 3, Mark 1, Luke 3, and John 1.

² I used the word chosen here to help explain the word "anointed" -- the word anointed in the Old Testament is "Messiah" and the New Testament equivalent is "Christ."

³ In the Gospel of Mark, the violent word "cast out" is used to connect Jesus' temptation with Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden. After they fell into sin, they were treated this way: "After God cast man out, He placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life. (Genesis 3:24). Jesus, who has our sins upon Him from His Baptism, is now treated as a sinner. He is "cast out" into the wilderness also, to face the fierce attack from Satan. But Jesus is the perfect Son of God, and He will overcome the temptations and destroy the devil's power over us!

→ Jesus is the **New Israel**, who unlike Old Testament Israel, rebelled in their **40 years** in the wilderness. Jesus will perfectly trust in God and His Word for us and for our salvation; even while being fiercely tempted by Satan for **40 days** in the wilderness.

The key to understanding the Temptations of Christ is that **He is there for you**; He is your substitute as He wages war against Satan. *He will be tempted, but He will never sin!*

Jesus fights for us, otherwise we don't have a chance against Satan. We easily give in to **temptations**; we are charmed by the **world**; we are distracted by **desires and lust**. Like Eve who believed Satan's lie, we too believe his lies and fall into sin. Like Adam, we disobey God's commands and we fall into sin. Satan loves to **lead us** into temptation and then **accuse us** as condemned and guilty sinners. *We don't have a chance against Satan --*

So Jesus takes our place.

*Unlike **Adam**, Christ will resist Satan's temptations!*

*Unlike **Eve**, Christ will not believe Satan's lies*

*Unlike **Israel**, Christ will hold fast to the Word of God!*

*Unlike **all of us**, Christ will conquer Satan!*

Jesus is the Son of God who overcomes Satan for us and for our salvation!

Remember that this battle with Satan was not just a 40 day event; it continued throughout Jesus' ministry.

- Jesus conquered Satan every time He cast out demons and set people free.
- Jesus battled Satan daily with the plethora of daily temptations that we all face
- Jesus bitterly withstood Satan's temptation in the Garden of Gethsemane;
- and finally, Jesus crushed Satan's head and left him powerless when He died on the cross.
 - Christ's descent into Hell proclaimed Satan's defeat!
 - His Resurrection from the dead publicly announced it!

- His Ascension into Heaven is like a cosmic victory parade!

Satan is now in his death throes. His last gasp is soon coming, when on the Last Day, Jesus will cast Satan and all of his wicked demons into the lake of fire.

Satan Is Defeated,
you are set free from his power, his lies, and his deceptions.

Jesus Has Conquered Satan;
and He gives you the victory!

We learn from Christ how to deal with daily temptations. You have the same weapon that Jesus had: the Word of God, the Bible! Like Jesus, you hold fast to the Word of God and overcome Satan and his temptations. You trust the Scriptures! The power to resist the devil does not lie *within* you; the power is in the Word of God! That is why it is important to be Biblically literate and doctrinally sound. You need to know the Scriptures, learn the Word, even memorize God's promises! **The power is in the Word of God to resist the devil, his lies and his temptations!** Your job is to learn, know, remember, and rely on God's Word and Promises⁴!

Satan will tempt you in many and various ways, but underneath it all is the lie and deception that **God is not trustworthy**. With Jesus, twice Satan said **"IF** you are the Son of God . . ." even though God the Father had just announcement it publicly at His baptism. Satan does the same thing with you. He will lie and deceive you so that you think that **God is not trustworthy**.

The way that Martin Luther taught this was that Satan's most powerful temptation is to make you think that **God is angry with you**; that God is working against you; that He has abandoned you. Satan whispers to you all kinds of lies:

⁴ That's one of the key lessons from the Adam and Eve story. They had heard God say "do not eat from the fruit of the tree in the middle of the Garden," but when tempted by Satan, they didn't remember God's Word accurately, nor did they hold fast to it. They quickly believed Satan's word and fell into sin.

- ✓ God is not listening to your prayer
- ✓ God won't forgive your sin
- ✓ God is the cause of suffering in your life
- ✓ God is not watching out for you
- ✓ God has abandoned you

Satan whispers to you “**God is angry with you**” or “**His Word is not trustworthy.**” If Satan can convince you that God is the “bad guy” who can't be trusted, then you will not turn to Him in times of trouble nor look to Him for all good things.

Remember, the victory is already been won by Christ and given to you through faith! Satan's lies and deceptions are exposed!

Combat Satan like Jesus did . . . hold fast to the Word of God. Learn and remember the promises God makes to you – that God is loving, kind, gracious and merciful; that

- **God the Father** watches over every detail of your life, provides for you, and is at work for your good; that
- **God the Son** has paid for every sin you commit and considers you forgiven, righteous, and holy in His sight; that
- **God the Holy Spirit** lives within you and actively works to strengthen your faith through His Word and Sacrament.

Hold fast to the Word of God when you are tempted by Satan . . . even if He tempts you to believe that God is angry with you and can't be trusted!

Jesus was driven out into the wilderness to face Satan for you in your place. Jesus overcame every temptation and ultimately defeated Satan by His death on the cross. The victory is already been won by Christ and given to you through faith!

**Stand firm,
and resist the devil!**

Amen!

Lord Jesus, you resisted the devil by holding fast to the Word of God. **And then you crushed him for us by your death on the cross.** We look forward to the last day, when **Satan and his depraved demons are finally cast into the lake of fire.** Until that day, **send us the Holy Spirit,** so that we too may resist the devil and his temptations **by trusting your Holy Word.** Give us the strength live holy and Godly lives of faith, **and lead us not into temptation.** Amen!

Genesis 3:1-24

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’” ² The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³ but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’” ⁴ “You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. ⁵ “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶ When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. ⁸ Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?” ¹⁰ He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.” ¹¹ And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?” ¹² The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.” ¹³ Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” ¹⁴ So the Lord God said

to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. ¹⁵ And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel. ¹⁶ To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.” ¹⁷ To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. ¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.” ²⁰ Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.

²¹ The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. ²² And the Lord God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” ²³ So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. ²⁴ After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

1 Peter 5:8-11

Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

¹⁰ And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.¹¹ To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Mark 1:9-13

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.¹⁰ Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.¹¹ And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”

¹² At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness,¹³ and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.