

Temptation - Satan

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 02 February 2012

Preacher: John Overton

[0 : 00] Um, what that means is, uh, that my, my charge is to help you understand the mnemonic realm. Okay. What motivates demons? What frightens demons? How they seek to beguile you or ensnare you and how we might seek to undermine them.

It is a lofty topic. It is a topic that I will not at all exhaust tonight. It is, um, been the subject of countless volumes and countless, um, essays.

And there's just so much information. You can't really fit it into a matter of 45 minutes, but we're going to do the best that we can to give you guys a brief synopsis of who you're dealing with and how to deal with them. Um, a couple of weeks ago, I started by talking about just why we're here. We're here to engage brokenness, right? To partner with Jesus Christ in engaging brokenness ever since the fall of man, which is, you know, Satan's first, um, I guess, scene in the, uh, in the play of, in the play of, uh, eternity.

Uh, he tempts Adam and Eve. They fall. Sin happens. Okay. The world, all of creation is affected. All of it is corrupted by sin.

[1 : 10] Ever since then, God in Jesus Christ has been redeeming it. He's been in this process of constant redemption. Um, and there's, and there's redemption taking place on all different kinds of levels.

There, there's redemption taking place on societal levels, uh, civic levels, communal levels, interpersonal levels between two people and then personal levels.

Okay. Um, his redemption is not limited to just simply, uh, salvation of sin. It is that it's absolutely that it's the most important part about it, but it's also redemption of everything. Okay.

He intends to redeem everything in the end that can be redeemed. Certain things like we talked about a couple of weeks ago, cannot be. So then last week, Clay came and he began to open up this series of sin and temptation.

Okay. Because at the heart of redemption is the heart. Okay. No true redemption happens apart from the heart really, truly being changed, transformed.

[2 : 19] So God starts with the heart. And then through the change of that heart, the creation of new desires, he begins to work out that redemption in their life, in their relationships, in their communities, in their societies.

And so God's plan begins in our heart. Okay. This is just a setup, kind of a contrast for what Satan's plan is. I want to read you this somewhat lengthy quote by, uh, by John Wesley.

This is really awesome. This is exactly what my heart was. I didn't read this till this week, so I didn't really have this in my possession to read to you guys a couple of weeks ago. But this is exactly what the kingdom of God is.

And this is exactly what Satan is attempting to thwart. He says this. Let me just say this before I read the quote.

If God's will is to engage creation's brokenness, then Satan's will is to maintain it. Okay. If God's purpose is to redeem the brokenness of all creation, then Satan's intention is to maintain the brokenness and to further it.

[3 : 32] Here goes John Wesley. The devices whereby the subtle God of this world, which is a name for Satan, labors to destroy the children of God, or at least to torment whom he to torment whom he cannot destroy to perplex and hinder them in running the race which is set before them are numberless as the stars of heaven or the sand upon the seashore.

That's his devices are. So his methods are. But it is his chief device that he endeavors to divide the gospel against itself and by one part of it to overthrow the other.

Here we go. The inward kingdom of heaven. This is what happens when you get saved. The inward kingdom of heaven, which is set up in the hearts of all that repent and believe in the gospel, is no other than righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

That's Romans 14. 17. Every babe in Christ knows we are made partakers of these the very hour that we believe in Jesus. But these are only the first fruits of his Spirit.

The harvest is not yet. Although these blessings are inconceivably great, yet we trust to see greater than these. We trust to love the Lord our God, not only as we do now with the weak, though sincere affection, but with all of our heart, with all of our soul, with all of our mind, with all of our strength.

[4 : 51] We look for power to rejoice always, to pray without ceasing, and in everything to give thanks, knowing this is the will of God for us in Christ Jesus.

That's 1 Thessalonians 5.18. We expect to be made perfect in love, in that which casts out all painful fear and all desire, but that of glorifying him we love.

And of loving and serving him more and more. We look for such an increase in the experimental knowledge and love of God, our Savior, as will enable us always to walk in the light as he is in the light.

We believe the whole mind will be in us, which it was in Christ Jesus, that we shall love every man so as to be ready to lay down our life for his sake, so as by his love to be freed from anger and pride and from every unkind affection.

We expect to be cleansed from all our idols, from all filthiness, whether of flesh or spirit, to be saved from all our uncleanness, inward and outward, to be purified as he is pure.

[5 : 50] Let's meet the fuel of the love. We trust in his promise, who cannot lie, that the time will surely come when in every word and work we shall do his blessed will on earth as it is done in heaven.

When all our conversations shall be seasoned with salt, all meet to minister grace to the hearers, when whether we eat or drink or whatever we do, it shall be done to the glory of God.

When all our words and deeds shall be in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God, even the Father through him. Now, this is the grand device of Satan to destroy the first work of God in the soul, or at least to hinder its increase.

Okay, so that was a very comprehensive definition of what it means for the kingdom of heaven to be on earth. Meaning what? God's will is being acted out by every facet of creation on earth, perfectly.

One day it will be like that. You can read it in Revelation, you can read it elsewhere in the Old Testament. One day it will be literally heaven on earth. God's will being acted out in every form and fashion, through every single person and being, every conscious soul, literally acted out to the glory of God.

[7 : 06] God's will is perfectly followed by us. There is no pride. There is no mourning. There is no weeping. There is no sadness. There is no anything except for what God intends for it to be.

Perfect love relationship with Jesus. Perfect love and will towards our fellow man. And Paul in 1 Thessalonians sums it up by saying that it's righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Okay? And that's exactly what Satan intends to afford and to undermine, is that we would experience that in varying degrees, increasing degrees in this life.

And being constantly redeemed, he wants us to constantly be destroyed. Okay? So I have four little points and I have some alliteration to kind of go with this. First one is perspective change.

Perspective change. C.S. Lewis once said, There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils.

[8 : 15] One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight.

End quote. Now what do you think we here in America deal with most? At least in our context, here in Dahlonga.

Is it an overemphasis of demons or is it an underemphasis? Underemphasis. Certainly. We don't hardly think of them. We don't even consider them to be in our daily lives.

We don't even really consider that they might be all around us at times. Angels as well. We don't think about things as we should.

During World War II, Nazi soldiers would tell the inmates they were going to get a shower. When really they were doing what? Going to the gas chamber.

[9 : 22] Satan would have you go to hell compliantly rather than kicking and screaming. He prefers to be unseen.

People wrongly misconstrue the devil by thinking of him as a little red creature that runs around and is chaotic and is involved in all kinds of chaos and he's not organized.

The devil is more like a CEO of a massive Fortune 500 company that is in charge of everything underneath the sun. He is the God of this world, the scripture says.

And there's things that he's doing that we don't see. There's a reality in this world that we need to come to grips with as well. That there are real souls and there is a real hell and there is a real heaven and there is a real war being waged for those souls.

I want to read you a cool story from 2 Kings. Go to 2 Kings 6. This is hopefully to help our perspective be changed a little bit.

[10 : 40] This is a really neat story that I came across this past week. 2 Kings 6. Beginning in verse 8.

Now the king of Aram was warring against Israel and he counseled with his servants saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp.

And the man of God, which is actually Elisha in this context. Whenever it says the man of God it's referring to Elisha. And the man of God sent word to the king of Israel saying, Beware that you do not pass this place for the Arameans are coming down there.

And the king of Israel sent to the place about which the man of God had told him. Thus he warned him so that he guarded himself there more than once or twice. Now the heart of the king of Aram was enraged over this thing.

And he called his servants and said to them, Will you tell me which of us is for the king of Israel?

And one of his servants said, No, my lord, O king. But Elisha, the prophet who was in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom.

[11 : 59] So he said, Go and see where he is that I may send and take him. And it was told him saying, Behold, he is in Dothan. Okay, so pause in the story real quick. What's going on is this king hates Israel, wants to destroy them, sets up a plan to do so.

Elisha is given a vision of this by God, tells the king of Israel, Hey, don't go to this place because they're setting up a trap for you. Then it says, More than just once or twice. This has happened several times.

And the king from the Arameans is furious. And he's like, Who is Elisha? Who is this guy that keeps thwarting all my plans? I keep setting up these, you know, points of attack.

And every time that I do, he comes up underneath me and tells the king of Israel and they don't come my way and I don't get to capture them. So he's continually frustrated. He's beginning to hate Elisha. And he says, Where is Elisha?

I'm going to find him and kill him. So he's in Dothan, right? Picking up in verse 14. And he sent horses and chariots and a great army there. And they came by night and surrounded the city.

[13 : 03] This is where Elisha was. Now when the attendant or the servant of the man of God, Elisha, had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was encircling the city.

And his servant said to him, Alas, my master, what shall we do? Okay? So the king had sent an army to go kill one man, Elisha.

Elisha's servant wakes up, goes and looks outside and sees this massive army surrounding the mountainside and says, Oh my gosh, what are we going to do? Goes and asks Elisha, Elisha, what are we going to do? This is insane.

Picks up in verse 16. So he answered, Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them. Then Elisha prayed and said, Oh Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see and the Lord opened the servant's eyes and he saw and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed to the Lord and said, Strike the people with blindness, I pray. So he struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha. Then Elisha said to them, This is not the way, nor is this the city.

[14:17] Follow me and I will bring you to the man whom you seek. And he brought them to Samaria. Now it came about that when they had come into Samaria that Elisha said, Oh Lord, open the eyes of these men that they may see.

So the Lord opened their eyes and they saw and behold, they were in the midst of Samaria. That was Israelite territory. So you got that? These men are surrounding the city.

Elisha isn't fearful. Why? He prays for his servant. Lord, please open his eyes that he may see what I see. And then all of a sudden the servant opens his eyes and he sees all these chariots of fire, angels surrounding them.

And he says, See, we have them outnumbered. They don't have as many soldiers as we do. Then, they go out to meet them. Right? This army comes to meet Elisha.

They didn't see the angels. They were going to come take Elisha. Elisha prays, Lord, strike them down with blindness. So they all become blind. A whole army is blinded. Elisha then tells them, Hey, the man that you're looking for isn't in here.

[15:26] He can't be found here. He's actually down to the next city. I'll take you there. Takes him down to Israelite territory. Sure enough, in the story, opens their blinded eyes and they see that they're in captivity of Israel.

Okay? There is a reality in this world that we don't see and that we cannot detect empirically. You can't taste it.

You can't touch it. You can't see it. You can't feel it. You can't hear it. But it's still there. And so we, living in a materialist society, want to say, well, if I can't see it or feel it or so on and so forth, I don't want to believe in it.

If it's not observable, I'm not going to believe it. Science is going to reason you away in time. So Satan hides behind science and Satan hides behind that kind of reasoning and says, maybe you don't see me or feel me or touch me or whatever, but I'm still very much intimately involved in your life and I'm still very much intimately involved in your society and I'm doing things that you can't perceive.

Okay? So this text is meant to open up for you guys the reality that there are spiritual forces of wickedness and there are spiritual forces that are good in this world. Don't be constrained as you're simply thinking about things in light of what you can see or feel.

[16:46] There's real conflict in this world that we need to come to grips with. I'll give you one more quick example. This is from Matthew 26, 53. Just a side note, these things are really perceived by faith.

Okay? So if you don't have faith, which the world that we live in does not, they don't see these things. They don't see that there are demons and devils.

They don't see that there are spiritual forces working against us all. They don't see the trap that they don't see the gas chamber that we've been enabled to see by faith, if that makes sense.

They're living in ignorance. In Matthew 26, verse 53, really, let's go back to 51.

This is during Jesus' betrayal and arrest. It says this in 51, And behold, one of those who were with Jesus, this is, we learn later, Peter, reached and drew out his sword and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear.

[17:58] Then Jesus said to him, put your sword back into its place. For all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. 53, Or do you think that I cannot appeal to my father and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?

So Jesus saw the same thing that Elisha saw, which was that if I simply said the word, if I wanted it to happen, I could ask my father and he could send twelve legions of angels, a legion was six thousand, so roughly seventy-two thousand plus angels at my disposal.

If I needed your help, I would have asked for it. And so he's rebuking Peter, but it's also, we can learn something from this about the spiritual world, right? It's there, it's present, we don't see it all the time, but it's a reality.

So these are just biblical illustrations of things that we don't necessarily always see. Okay, so we need to have a perspective change. Secondly, personality diagnosis.

Personality diagnosis. There's a lot of things we can learn about Satan from his names. Okay, the Bible describes him as a thief.

[19:18] So he intends to steal something. He describes him as the father of lies, meaning that all lives are from him in some way.

He's the originator of them. He births them. He incites them. Next, he's described as a lion, so he's fierce. He's described as the God of the world, meaning he has rule, he has dominion over the things in this world.

It's not necessarily saying that he's the God of this world. In fact, how many of you believe that Satan is the opposite of God? Would you say that Satan is the opposite of God?

No? Yes? Yes? This is one of the best things that I've found out this entire week. My, probably the richest thing that I've seen is that Satan is not the opposite of God.

Okay? Because in order to be the opposite of God, he would have to possess the same exact qualities of God except in a depraved way. So, if God is perfect goodness, he'd have to be perfect badness.

[20 : 32] But, by definition, right, if God is sovereign, then Satan couldn't be sovereign. Somebody that's sovereign rules over everything. So, Satan's not that way.

So, we learn things. Satan is the opposite of God only in one way and that is in his intentions.

Okay? His intentions, his desires, his ways, his methods, his motivations, and his dealings with men are in total opposite to what God desires.

But, he is in no way co-equal with God. Not omnipotent, not omnipresent, not omniscient, not autonomous, not sovereign, not infinite. And, he doesn't have the ability to create.

Okay? So, this whole notion that Jesus, you know, like God is on this side of my shoulder and Satan's on this side of my shoulder is really just nonsense. He is not equal with God.

What God says goes. We see the power of this displayed in stories like Job, right? You go to the Old Testament, you see the story of Job, you see where Satan has to go and get permission from God to tempt Job.

[21 : 39] God even says, have you considered my servant Job? And, Satan has to, again, get permission to do other things.

God says, you can tempt him, you can take these things away from him, but you can't hurt his health. Then, of course, he goes, does all these things. Job persists in his obedience and his submission to God, does not sin against God, and then Satan goes back and says, well, the reason why he's not sinning against you is because you haven't taken away his health.

He still has that to hold on to. Then he says, fine, take away his health. So God gives him permission again to go and tempt. So that's an incredibly important thing for us to grasp, is that Satan has no power that isn't given to him.

He can't do anything to us unless God allows it or enables it by allowing him. He may despise God, he may hate his son, but it's because he can't be God.

Isn't that why he fell initially? Because he wanted to be like God? But he couldn't. And so God authoritatively threw him down to earth.

[22 : 53] He cursed him and the other devil's with him. You can also learn a little bit about devils and about their nature in seeing the way that they respond to Jesus in the New Testament.

Go to Matthew 8. Matthew 8. This is just one example of many, but it's really good when it comes to seeing how the devil responds.

It says this in verse 28. And when he had come to the other side into the country of the Gadarenes, two men who were demon-possessed met him as they were coming out of the tombs.

They were so exceedingly violent that no one could pass by that road. And behold, they cried out saying, what do we have to do with you, son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?

So this is an example of two exceedingly violent demons that could not be in any way, shape, or form constrained.

[24 : 16] That upon simply seeing Jesus, they go before him and they ask, what are you doing here? What are you doing with us? Is it time for us to be condemned into hell?

Are you coming to throw us into the pit before the end of the age? They saw themselves in subjection to Jesus Christ. Completely and totally in subjection.

And no demon ever resisted Jesus when he wanted to cast them out. So there is power in Christ, absolute and sovereign power in Christ, over the demonic realm.

Another verse is in James 2.19, it says this, we believe that God is one, that's good. The demons also believe and shudder. They're fearful. They're frightened by Christ, which is one of the answers to my question from earlier.

What frightens demons? Jesus does. You don't frighten demons. Your words don't frighten demons. The scripture itself does not frighten demons.

[25 : 22] Okay? Somebody's saying arbitrarily to a demon, be gone, means nothing. In fact, a lot of times when you see things like Benny Hinn, these stage performances in which people come up and they're supposedly demon possessed, maybe they are demon possessed, and then the demons, you know, they're shaking and stuff, and Benny Hinn casts them out and they fall on the floor and they're flopping around.

That is so, that is not spiritual warfare. Okay? That is Satan playing around with Satan. That is not God. Okay?

When Jesus cast demons out, they didn't flop around on the ground. They either looked like they were dead, and then Jesus raised them up, or they were completely somber and calm and had their mind and their wits about them.

There was no transitional period. Okay? So, demons are oftentimes playing around with demons, deceiving people by thinking that they have power over demons when they don't have power over demons.

The only thing that legitimately scares a demon is Jesus Christ, and it scares them a lot. So, understanding our spiritual warfare against Satan needs to always be in light of the fact that the only thing that we have that's powerful against them is Jesus.

[26 : 40] But in Christ, we have all power, right? Turn to Colossians really quickly. We were in this book last semester, and I want you to notice the language, the similarity of the language between the verse we read from Ephesians and Ephesians 6.12 describing our enemy, that it's not against flesh and love, it's against spiritual forces and all those things, the powers of darkness.

And then listen to Colossians 1, 13 through 16. For He, that's Jesus, delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins, and He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

For by Him all things were created, listen to that, for by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, that's referring to demonic presences, all things have been created by Him and for Him.

All things have been created by Him and for Him. That's in reference to spiritual forces, both good and evil. In Proverbs 16, 4, it says this, the Lord has made everything for His own purpose, even the wicked for the day of evil.

So the demons are creation, Satan is creation. He's not infinite, he's not eternal, he's not sovereign, he's not all-powerful, he has to ask permission just like everybody else.

[28 : 39] That should give you great hope in your battle against sin. I think, you know, a lot of it's, I used to play basketball a lot, and so in basketball, or any sport really, if you go into the game thinking you're going to lose, you're probably going to lose.

However, if you go into the game thinking you're going to win, you're probably going to have a better chance of winning, right? Or you're probably going to win. Your mindset is a lot of the battle. You know?

Confidence really affects things. And so, Satan is always trying to get you to think improperly about him, to attribute to him more power than he really has.

Or sometimes, maybe not attribute to him some of the power that he does have, right? Like you said, you can be a materialist on one end of the pendulum, or you can be a magician on the other. We need to be balanced.

We need to realize that God is sovereign, Christ is in us, the Holy Spirit has been given to us, greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world. But, Satan is the god of this world.

[29 : 42] And apart from Christ, we stand no chance of enduring temptation or resisting temptation or fighting in the strength of God's might, which is what that Ephesians passage says.

Okay? Thirdly, this is a, I was trying to find another P word, so this is pernicious methods.

Now, that means, that means like evil or ruinous or injurious or whatever. Pernicious is, it just means evil or wicked, okay? But I was trying to keep it the P, the alliteration.

So, pernicious methods. Pernicious methods, evil methods. There's a lot of reasons why the Lord allows us to be tempted and the Lord allows us to be tried.

I think the most important one is probably this. There's two that are of the same importance. The first one is to show us what is in our hearts. Okay? Second Chronicles 32, 31.

[30 : 58] It says this, God left him alone only to test him that he might know all that was in his heart. God puts us through tests, puts us through trials, allow temptations to come into our life to show us what we're made of.

This past week, for instance, as I was beginning to prepare for this message and trying to prepare, there was just a lot of spiritual warfare. And the way that Satan was really trying to tempt me most was by getting me to rely upon my own effort.

And not upon the Lord. Which looks like prayerlessness. Okay? That's always a very difficult battle because praying is difficult when you don't feel like doing it.

And when you don't feel the motivation to do it. But it's necessary. So, God allowed the temptation to show me throughout the week, today especially, that apart from him, I can't do anything.

That I need his grace. That I need his forgiveness. That I need to stand in the gospel as I stand and teach about these things. That I feel like a hypocrite in a lot of ways because I know that I've been beaten down, tripped up, made a fool of in many ways this past week in my preparation.

[32 : 08] And now I have to teach it to you guys. But that's okay because God's grace is sufficient. And just like Paul, I was led to pride and God allows a messenger of Satan in a sense to tempt me to show me my sin.

So that's the first thing, I think, to show us what's in our hearts. Secondly, is to show himself to man. To show himself to man. We don't realize the power and the strength that God puts forth on our behalf in the sufficiency of his grace until we compare our trials with our weaknesses.

God's power and God's grace are then seen clearly in our lives. the effectiveness of an antidote is not realized until one has been exposed to the poison. The preciousness of a medicine is revealed by the presence of the disease.

Right? So what does sin do? Sin gives us something to compare the grace of God to. So God allows, God is even pleased, I think, in some ways, with the employment of Satan.

Not that it would affect this in negative ways, not that it would lead us into sin, but that it would enable us to see our sin when we fall, and to then see the beauty of the glory, the beauty and the glory of the grace of God.

[33 : 32] Okay? So God uses temptations, trials, failures, sin, to glorify his son, to glorify the work of his son on the cross.

The preciousness of the medicine is revealed by the presence of the disease. Okay, there's other reasons. I'll just list these off for you. Why does God allow us to be tempted to prove the genuineness of our faith?

That's 1 Peter 1, 6 and 7. To increase one's joy in this life and reward in the next, that's James 1, 2 through 4, and verse 12. To purge out one's sin, as we just said, that's 2 Corinthians 12, 7 through 10.

To prepare us for future ministry. We see that in Luke 22, 31 and 32. What I mean by that is when Peter, who is known for that colossal failure, when he says to Jesus, although all may fall away, I'm not going to fall away.

If everyone denies you and rejects you, I'm not going to deny and reject you. And he says, before the rooster crows, three times, you're going to reject me three times. And so what does he do?

[34 : 38] He goes and he totally denies even knowing Christ, even curses the people for saying that he has any association with them. Denies Christ horribly, miserably. It's disgusting.

And then in Luke 22, 31 and 32, and then we see later in John, Jesus prays and he says, I'll just turn now to you really briefly.

He says, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail.

And you, when you have, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers. Okay, so he was going to allow this failure for the purpose of humbling him and for the purpose of also strengthening the other Christians in the future.

So there's that reason. The Lord also allows temptation to purify our testimony of the gospel. You see that in Washington. J.I.

[35 : 43] Packer said this, this is the ultimate reason from our standpoint why God fills our lives with troubles and perplexities of one sort or another. It is to ensure that we shall learn to hold him fast.

The reason why the Bible spends so much of its time reiterating that God is a strong rock, a firm defense, and a sure refuge, and a help for the weak, is that God spends so much of his time bringing home to us that we are weak, both mentally and morally, and dare not trust ourselves to find or to follow the right road.

God wants us to feel that our way through life is rough and perplexing so that we may learn to lean on him. Therefore, he takes steps to drive us out of self-confidence to trust in him.

Okay? So I just wanted to say that as a prerequisite for the methods of Satan and why he would allow these things to be. How does the devil tempt us? Go to 1 John real quick.

This is 1 John 2.16. 1 John 2.16.

[37 : 01] For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life is not from the Father, but it's from the world.

Now, take that verse, commit the memory, and turn over to Matthew 4. This is the temptation of Jesus Christ.

Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights. He didn't eat. Satan came during that time and began to tempt him. Let's read it.

Matthew 4, 1-11. Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after he had fasted 40 days and 40 nights, he then became hungry.

And the tempter came and said to him, If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

[38 : 08] Then the devil took him into the holy city, and he had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple. And he said to him, If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, He will give his angels charge concerning you, and on their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.

He's quoting from Psalm 91. Jesus said to him, On the other hand, it is written, You shall not put the Lord your God to the test. Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain, and he showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

And he said to him, All these things I will give you, if you fall down and worship me. Then Jesus said to him, Be gone, Satan, for it is written, You shall worship the Lord your God and serve him only.

Then the devil left them, and behold, angels came and began to minister to him. In this passage, we see three categories of sin, and they are exactly what we just read from 1 John 2 16.

The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life. This is a very important thing to understand. This is the only way in which Satan will tempt you.

[39 : 14] It is through one of these three things. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life. Let's explain. Firstly, Satan tempts Jesus with the lust of the flesh.

This is in verses 2 and 3. He tempts him in the midst of his hunger, right? Natural cravings, the lust of the flesh, things that are natural to the flesh.

Okay? So it may be food, and he tempts him to gluttony. It may be sex, and he tempts you to lust. It may be accomplishment, and he tempts you to pride.

It may be relationship, and he tempts you to idolatry. These are natural cravings, natural things that are not inherently wicked or evil, that Satan will use and twist to make you sin against God.

Natural things that are inherent to all of us. It's a short little list. That's an example. Secondly, we see in verse 5 and 6, the pride of life.

[40 : 29] The devil took him into the holy city, had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, said to him, if you are the son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, you will give angels charge concerning you. He starts quoting scripture, but he twisted the meaning of it, right?

The passage in context is talking about trusting God, and he used it to justify testing God. How might he do this with us? Didn't God say he came to give you abundant life?

And yet all these sinners are having so much more fun with him. Didn't he say? Didn't he say? Didn't he say? Didn't he promise this? Didn't he promise that? He'll twist scripture so that you're tempted to test God.

which is in direct opposition to what the scripture even says. Didn't he tempt you? Or didn't he say that you're going to have the abundant life?

Then why are the sinners having so much more fun with you? A good response would be this. They are storing up wrath for themselves in the day of wrath. But I am content with Christ as my life.

[41 : 40] I consider all things to be lost in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For whom I willingly suffer the loss of all things. Right? This is teaching us something.

How to combat sin. How to combat lies. The truth. Satan's clever. He'll use things you think to be truth. He'll quote scripture even. And if you don't understand it, if you don't know it, if you don't know scripture to combat that idea or that faulty twisting, then you'll find yourself and match yourself as he intends.

So we have to know the word of God in order to combat the lies of Satan. He's a liar. It's his very nature to lie. He intends to come and steal and kill and destroy you. And he will do it in very tricky ways.

Thirdly, the lust of the eyes. This is in verse 8 and 9. And again the devil took him to a very high mountain and he showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, all these things I will give you if you fall down and worship.

The lust of the eyes is things that we see, right? It's the pleasures of sin. The pleasures of sin. Sin would not be enticing if it were not pleasurable.

[43 : 00] Okay? That's the reality that we have to deal with as Christians. Sin is pleasurable. people do enjoy that. We enjoy that. Right?

But, is it worth the cost of a relationship with Jesus? And that's what we have to go back and ask ourselves. Right? Moses in Hebrews 11 says the same thing.

He's like, I had everything in Egypt. But I consider the treasures of Egypt to be nothing in comparison to the reproach of Christ. He'd rather suffer as a Christian than be worshipped as a non-Christian.

Because he saw it as more valuable by faith. Okay? So, that was a really brief synopsis of how Satan tempts us. But I don't want to get into all the particulars. The next couple of weeks we're going to be talking about the flesh and talking about the world.

And we're going to expose some of those things in greater depth. But that's just the general outline of how he tempts you. It's through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

Those are the three categories through which you will work.

[44 : 02] And understand this too, okay? Satan is literally in charge of everything in the cosmos.

He's not simply constricted to personal... He doesn't simply whisper things into your ear, okay? He works through structures and systems in the world.

He works through government sometimes. He works through philosophies. He works through new ideas sometimes. He works through all different kinds of peoples and ways. Things that seem to be non-spiritual, he's working through those as well.

And even when God gives the ability to... I mean, it says in Job, this is an amazing reality. It says in Job that God allowed Satan to tempt Job and he went and killed everybody. So Satan sometimes has the power to even take life.

He's incredibly powerful. He can lead armies. He can do all kinds of things. So we're not just dealing with somebody that speaks and whispers into our ear.

[45 : 07] He's a very... It's a very comprehensive enemy. Okay? Fourthly, lastly, practical combat. Practical combat.

This is my favorite thing that I feel like I've probably learned this past week. Go to Psalm 39. So in light of all these temptations that we're going to be experiencing, in light of who Satan is and what he does, how do we do combat?

Psalm 39. Psalm 39. This is a really good illustration.

It says this. This is David speaking. I said, I will guard my ways that I may not sin with my tongue. I will guard my mouth as with a muzzle while the wicked are in my presence.

So the very first thing that the psalmist does is this. He says, I will do it. I will grip my teeth. I will man up.

[46 : 20] And I will not sin against my God. I will shut my mouth with my own strength. He puts faith in himself.

He puts confidence in himself. And what happens? Verse 2. I was dumb and silent. So he says, I did it for a while. I refrained even from good though. That's not good.

And my sorrow grew worse. So when the psalmist puts his confidence in himself, his sorrow grew worse. He didn't speak.

He didn't sin against God with his speech. But somehow, somehow, his sorrow grew even worse. Things did not get better. And there are many things that we do, right?

To try to tame our flesh. To ignore the world. And these things are in vain. Okay, Matt Chandler is one of our, one of, uh, a lot of the guys here favorite pastors.

[47 : 20] He says, you cannot have duty before delight. You have to have delight before duty. You have to have delight in God before duty. Or else it's going to be legalism.

You have to have delight in God. Right? If I just had to grip my teeth and say no to something, eventually, Satan's going to find other ways.

Listen, it's not just simply about the actual deed. It's about the heart behind the deed. If you're just simply not doing something because you don't think you're supposed to, because you want to look a certain way to your friends, because you don't want to, you know, embarrass yourself or like have to confess this next D group, that's not honoring to the Lord.

What's pleasing to God is a heart that says yes to His commandments. It is a heart that says I love Jesus Christ and I want to honor and serve my God whom I love.

So when I just try the grit your teeth method, it does not work out. That's what the psalmist is saying. My sorrow grew worse. Verse 3, My heart was hot within me while I was musing the fire burned. Then I spoke with my tongue, O Lord, make me to know my end and what is the extent of my days.

[48 : 27] Let me know how transient I am. Behold, you have made my days as hand breaths and my lifetime as nothing in yourself. Surely every man is at his best a mere breath. Surely every man walks about as a phantom.

Surely they make an uproar for nothing. He amasses riches and does not know who will gather them. Then He changes His tone. This is the proper approach to spiritual combat.

Verse 7, And now the Lord and now Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in You. Deliver me from all my transgressions. Make me not the reproach of the foolish. I have become dumb.

I do not open my mouth. So He's like, He's saying, I'm doing the very same thing that I originally intended to do, right? He says, I'm not going to open my mouth. I'm going to guard my waist. I'm not going to open my mouth. Then now He's saying, I have become dumb.

I do not open my mouth. Why? Because it is You who has done it. So He changes it. Initially, He was trying to withhold from saying something because it was His effort.

[49 : 32] Now He's looking at God and He's saying, God, You're my hope. My hope is in You. My trust is in You. Please, You help me do this thing. You help me shut my mouth. And He says, I shut my mouth because You enabled me to do so.

That's encouraging. David calls out to God for help. The God-honoring, sin-defeating thing to do is still to shut His mouth.

But this inaction is being done by God now. Okay? So oftentimes, this is kind of a cool thought, oftentimes the method that we employ in defeating sin is not what's wrong.

It's the heart behind it. Okay? The method, if we're always trying to change our method, that's not really the point. The point is to change the heart behind the method.

Okay? God isn't merely pleased with us abstaining from certain things or not going to certain places or going to certain places. He's pleased with us doing so because we love Him.

[50 : 38] Doing so because He is inspiring us to do that. Our mindset's often incorrect. But the psalmist is teaching us how to trust and call out to God.

And this we see repetitively through the psalms for help in our strivings and resistings and endurings because when we call out to God, then what we do will be done in the strength of His might.

Beginning in verse 10, remove your plague from me because of the oppression of your hand I am perishing. With reproofs you chasten a man for iniquity. You consume a moth with what is precious to him.

Surely every man is a mere breath. Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my cry. Do not be silent at my tears for I am a stranger with you, a sojourner like all my fathers. Turn your gaze away from me that I may smile again before I depart and end no more.

So in 10-13, the Lord chastises His servant David for His prayerlessness and for His haughtiness. Okay, then he gets to verse 1-3 in chapter 40 and this is where it all turns around.

[51 : 50] I waited patiently for the Lord and He inclined to me and He heard my cry. He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay and He set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm.

And He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God many will see and fear and will trust in the Lord. The Lord answers him, receives him, unentangles him from temptation, fills him with joy and praise and makes an example out of Him for our lives.

Okay, so we need to fight and wage war in the strength of God's might. And that's done by simply the people in prayer. And that's what we need. Okay? That was all.

I'm going to pray for us in the Lord. Be done. Father, we have so much to be grateful for in Christ. We thank you. We thank you. Thank you. Thank you.