



Temptation

**“Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness
to be tempted by the devil”
(Matthew 4:1)**

The temptations of Jesus somehow emphasizes his humanity in light of the fact that temptation is a part of human life. Although we are well aware that Jesus was both human and divine, it is reassuring to know that He was subject to temptation and therefore he is aware of what we, as human beings experience within our daily lives. No doubt because of the divine nature of Christ, we often fail to remember that he was truly a human being. He was a man who walked this earth and did similar things that human beings did. We tend only to think of his divinity. But although Jesus was “led by the Spirit” during this ordeal, yet he still experienced struggles and had to totally rely of his obedience and complete acceptance of the Father’s will.

In the three temptations which Jesus encountered, the devil invited him to become a type of Messiah God had not called him to be. Jesus is asked to become a political Messiah and to consider the human privileges of wealth, glory and power. This was the kind of Messiah that many of the Jews were expecting but it was not the type of Messiah God wanted Jesus to be.

In knowing the Old Testament, Jesus refuses to comply to the attractive offers of the devil. Instead he chooses to be completely dependent on the Father, demonstrating that recognition of God, following his will and being obedient to him must always come first. In not succumbing to the devil’s temptations, Jesus indicates that nothing—not wealth, not power, not even physical food—must come between us and obedience to the Father.

Little do we realize that the temptations which Jesus faced, we, as Christians, experienced in many and varied ways. We encounter temptations of power, wealth and material things. We experience the temptation to place God at our level instead of reaching to his level. We are tempted to make God in our own image and likeness instead of enjoying that we are made in his image. We face the temptation to use prayer to bargain with God and to receive what we want instead of allowing God to give us what is best for us and our situation in life.

My dear friends, the lesson we learn from the temptations which Jesus encountered is that we are to be steadfast in our obedience to God and his will. Christ knew what the Scriptures said and he understood his vocation as God’s Messiah and so he reaffirmed his fidelity to his Father. Even although the temptations which our Lord faced may have looked attractive yet he dismissed them because as the old saying goes, “All that glitters is not gold.” However, while we want to be faithful, we still find ourselves wanting to “give in” to the alluring or appealing aspects of temptation.

The temptations of Jesus teach us that we are called to live by God’s word as Jesus did. We need to know what it says in order to live by it and to resist the challenges we may encounter due to the alluring nature of the evil one who is always willing and ready to lead us into temptation. Nevertheless, amidst the temptations and struggles of life, always remember that our “God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it” (1 Cor. 10:13).