

**Matthew in Biblical Perspective:  
A Biography of Jesus of Nazareth the Christ –  
Seeing Jesus – The Temptation of Christ**

**Matthew 4:1-12**

By [Dr. Harry Reeder III](#)

*February 8, 2009 – Morning Sermon*

This is our eighth study in the first section of Matthew titled Seeing Jesus where we are looking at the temptation of Christ. I look forward to being with you tonight. We have been studying the doctrine of baptism on Sunday nights and tonight we will look at the mode of baptism or exactly how much water do you need to be baptized. What does the Bible say about that? We will look at that tonight as we conclude our Lord's Day in praise and worship tonight. As we anticipate the missions conference in the next couple of weeks Cindy and I like to take one family and pray for them at a dinner table. These are families that are attending the conference that we support and we want to encourage them in the Lord. Also be praying for the mission's conference and that God would use this conference in the life of our congregation to make disciples of all the nations hastening the coming of the Lord. Our text for this study found in Matthew 4:1-12;

*1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." 4 But he answered, "It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple 6 and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you," and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone." 7 Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'" 11 Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him. 12 Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee.*

The grass withers and the flower fades. This is the Word of our God. It abides forever and by His grace and mercy may it be preached for you.

In the last study we looked at the baptism of Jesus and in this study we will look at the temptation of Jesus. In the last study we had a little bit of a dilemma because Jesus comes to John and John says, "I shouldn't baptize You, you ought to baptize me." Jesus says to John, "Permit it at this time for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" and here was our dilemma. Why would Jesus come to John to be baptized, insist on it when John insists that he shouldn't? Why would He do that knowing that John's baptism is the baptism of repentance and Jesus is sinless with no need of repentance? We found out two things. One is that Jesus didn't come for the baptism of John. Jesus came to be baptized by John. He came to be baptized by John for two reasons. One is to identify with the people that He would save and they are sinners to be saved by grace. The second reason is that Jesus would come as Prophet, Priest and King. While the prophet and king could begin their ministry at any time, the priest could only begin his ministry at age 30. So Jesus begins His public ministry at age 30 with His ordination. Numbers 8 says you are to baptize them or ritually cleanse them by another priest and that's what John is.

This baptism is so important that later on in Matthew 21 Jesus is going to come in and do the work of a priest. Do you know what He does in Matthew 21 doing the work of a priest? He cleanses the temple. He drives out the moneychangers. They say to Him, "By what authority do You do this?" Jesus responds to them, "By the authority of the baptism of John?" Was John's baptism from heaven with authority or was it from the earth with no authority? It was with authority. That means I know cleanse the temple with authority. Then, of course, when Judas abandons the faith and betrays Jesus and they have to replace him in Acts 1 they look for who can appropriately replace him. They said, "Let's look for one who was with Jesus from His baptism." There is the key point of His public ministry as Prophet, Priest and King, from His baptism to His resurrection.

Now we come to another interesting moment which is the temptation of Jesus. It said that the Holy Spirit led Him up into the wilderness to be tempted. In a couple of chapters Jesus is going to teach us to pray and one of the things that He will teach us to pray about it is, "Lead us not into temptation." Oh my goodness! How in the world does this work out? What is it about this moment, the temptation of Jesus, why has Matthew recorded it and what is crucial about it? Let me give you two things before we look at the text. The first thing is that Matthew is going to use this to teach us that there are two kinds of temptations. There is the temptation from Satan and the world designed to destroy you. If you are a believer Satan has the temptation designed to destroy your joy, your ministry, your family, your marriage. If he can't stop you from being saved, he can stop you from serving the Savior with joy. That's what he wants to do. Then he has another temptation for those of you who do not know Christ as Lord and Savior.

Whether it's the use of sophisticated denial of Christ, sophisticated denial of God, the exultation of self, if there is any way that he can tempt you to blind your eyes that you will not come to the one true and living Savior who is ready to save you from yourselves, Satan wants you to remain in your unbelief. Satan is tempting believers to destroy their witness, their families, their life, their ministry and he would tempt unbelievers to blind them that they would not come to Christ.

Now, God, who never tempts to destroy, tempts or here's a better word for that, tests us to prepare us, to mature us and to grow us in grace. God designs tests to grow us because we don't grow in days of prosperity. We grow in days of adversity. "Count it all joy my brethren when you encounter various trials" (James 1:2), why? It's designed to grow you. So God tries us to mature us, to refine us, to grow us and to prepare us for ministry with absolute dependence upon Him. Sometimes Satan's temptations can be sovereignly superseded by the hand of God to make a trial to grow us. This is one of those cases where Satan comes to tempt to destroy and God uses this to prepare His Son for His public ministry, to step forward, to lead us to Calvary to save us from our sins. I want to show you this from the Bible.

I want to go to the book of James. I love to hear the pages turning of the Bible, Presbyterian air-conditioning, so keep turning. James 1:12-15 says, *12 Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial...* In other words, God's trials bless us as He produces endurance and perseverance. James goes on to say,

*(12b) for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. 13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. 14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.*

So here is what he is saying. God tests you to grow you, blessing you. Satan and the world would tempt you to entice from inside of you to entice the exultation of self with temptation. So you have an enemy within and you have an enemy without. If the enemy outside that is temptation from Satan and the world joins up with the old man inside and they get married they produce a child in sin. That sin destroys. What is the best way from keeping the child from being born? It is sin in our life. What is the best way to do that? It is to kill the parents. Flee temptation and you will kill the old man every day. Die to yourself and you will flee temptation.

Let's look at one other passage in 1 Corinthians 10. This is just another little promise particularly around God's promises about how He tests us and then we will look at the testing and temptation of Jesus. 1 Corinthians 10:12, 13 says, **12** *Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. 13 No*

*temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.* So if you are under the testing hand of God two things you need to know here. Number one never let pride work in your life because pride leads to a fall. So don't rely on your strength, rely on the strength of the Lord. Secondly, when testing comes the first thing you know is that nothing comes in your life that hasn't come somewhere else, meaning it's common to man. The second thing you know is that Jesus has already walked ahead of you and thirdly God will make a way of escape. What is the way of escape? It is Jesus who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Now let's take a look at this Jesus and how this account in Matthew 4 helps us. By the way, when you start this passage every word in the Bible is important. It's inerrant, it's infallible, and every word is important including the very first word. The very first word in this passage is "then." "Then" stands for, after the baptism of Jesus by John. How did the baptism of Jesus by John, end? The Father made an announcement and the Father made an anointing. The Father announced, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The eternal sonship of Christ is proclaimed by His Father and the full pleasure of the Father upon His Son. Then He anoints Him for His ministry as Prophet, Priest, and King, the Messiah. He anoints Him not with the ritual cleansing of baptism but now He baptizes Him with the Spirit as the Holy Spirit is poured out like a dove upon Him.

Now, what's the first thing the Holy Spirit, upon Jesus, does? He leads Him. He leads Him three places. In Matthew 4:1 He leads Him first into the wilderness, a location. The second is that He leads Him into the wilderness for a purpose which is to be tried, to be tempted. Thirdly, He leads Him to face the adversary, the devil, literally in the Greek *diabolos*. He faces *diabolos* with his diabolical scheme to destroy the Redeemer before He can get to Mount Calvary and redeem us. The Spirit leads Him there. Why would the Holy Spirit lead Jesus first to the wilderness, a specific location? Secondly, to be tempted, tried and tested, thirdly by the adversary, by the slanderer, by the accuser, by *diabolos* the devil.

So why would the Spirit do that? Let's take a look at what happens. The temptation of Jesus is actually three installments. Here's the first one found in Matthew 4:3, 4; *3 And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." 4 But he answered, "It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.""* Here comes Satan, the tempter, and Jesus has fasted 40 days and 40 nights. Who else fasted 40 days and 40 nights? It was Elijah, the prophet over the prophets and Moses, who gave us the law. Jesus clearly identified with them as He fasted 40 days and 40 nights. Jesus is fully human which means He is absolutely hungry. There would be no doubt about that.

So Satan then comes at that moment and as he comes at that moment he says interestingly, *"If you are the Son of God..."* Remember that first word, then? That

word then ties us back to the baptism of Jesus. When you go back to the baptism of Jesus you have the gift of the Holy Spirit. Now the Holy Spirit leads Him into the wilderness and you have the announcement of the Father. The announcement of the Father was, "This is My Son..." So what is the accusation of Satan? "Well, if You are the Son of God, then command these stones to become bread." In other words Satan is saying to Jesus, "How could the Father who takes pleasure in You withhold from You bread when You are hungry?" I don't mean to be trivial but it's like cutting on the television. He is saying, "You deserve it to have it your way. Have it your way, you deserve a break today. I mean if You are the Son of God, isn't all about you? Why would the Father withhold this from You?"

Then Jesus from the Scripture, the Old Testament, the Pentateuch, specifically Deuteronomy which He will quote from three times, looks at him and says, "*It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'*" In other words, "Satan, I don't live for the gratification of appetites. Satan My meaning in life is not My personal absorption with the gratification of any appetites including this one. There is nothing wrong with food. There is nothing wrong with eating it but nothing, even God's good gifts, will stand in the way of my fullness of joy in God Himself. Satan, don't you understand, first of all the primacy of the spiritual over the physical? I need to feed upon the Word more than I need to feed upon bread. Secondly certainly you don't know this but every child of God can know it that the Word of God that brings you into communion with the God of the Word is so glorious by the hand of the Spirit of God in your life that even the things of this world that are valid pale into insignificance than knowing Him. He is my meat. He is my drink. Oh come, taste and see the Lord is good. Drink deeply. Even the good gifts will not become opportunities for affection and adoration in place of My allegiance and My absorption, not with Myself but the living God." Certainly Satan will quit now, won't he? Oh no.

Temptation installment number two is found in Matthew 4:5, 6; **5** *Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple* **6** *and said to him, (quoting from Psalms) 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'*" You can almost see Satan saying, "You want to quote the Bible, okay then I'll quote the Bible." Then he comes back to, "If you really are the Son of God..." like was announced back at Your baptism. "Doesn't the Bible say that his son will be kept, so put yourself at the pinnacle of the temple" which is by the way at the southwest corner of Temple Mount, from there to the foot of the Kidron Valley would have been at least 450 feet or 45 stories high and he says "now cast yourself down. If you really believe the Bible is true and you quote the Bible as dependable then doesn't the Bible say, 'cast yourself down'?"

Then, of course, Jesus teaches us what he fully knows that the Bible never contradicts itself and every text has to be in context and the context of any promise of God to us is not about us but about His glory. Therefore no promise is to be claimed in contradiction to the glory of God. So the Lord answers him back in Matthew 4:7, *“Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’”* God's promises have not been given to us to test Him. There is only one divine exception in the Bible. God's promises are to give us confidence in life not the arrogance of the promotion of self in life. The only exception to testing the Lord is given in stewardship. Do not rob God of His tithes and offerings but test the Lord which is found in Malachi 3. The Lord says, “Test Me in this and see what I will do.” Except for that divine exception we are never to take God's promises and exalt ourselves in presumption against the Lord. So Satan of course is now repelled by the Word of God in context as he uses it out of context, as he uses it for our self-centered embracing instead of a God-centered exultation.

Now he goes to a third installment found in Matthew 4:8-11;

*8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” 10 Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written, “‘You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.’” 11 Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.*

What do you see happening in this third installment? You find Satan taking Jesus to a mountain, he shows Him the kingdoms of the world and he not only now distorts the Word of God he gives a lie as if it is the Word of God and claims the ability to give Jesus the kingdoms of this world. So what do you think is happening here? Jesus is going to live a sinless life, die on the cross, save us from our sins and be raised. Then 40 days later He will appear before the disciples at the Sea of Galilee and He will tell them, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go and make disciples of all the nations” (Matthew 28:18, 19). The book of Revelation tells us that He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Is Satan merely offering Him something that He is going to have anyway? So what is the temptation? Here is what Satan is offering. “Jesus, I'll give you the crown and you don't have to go through the cross. I'll give you the crown but you can bypass the cross.” In His position of absolute sovereignty Jesus says, “Be gone Satan” and the angels come and minister to Him. Satan leaves Him but he leaves Him only for a while.

What are some things that you and I can draw out of this? I want to give you two things. There are some very helpful things from this to help us in terms of our understanding of the tempter and temptation. There are some things that we need to be aware of lest you fall. Some who are reading this have not come to Christ and Satan's temptations have blinded you into the emptiness of the world

and the emptiness of unbelief claiming there will be great joy there. Some reading this are believers and so easily we become susceptible to that clandestine moment of rebellion against God of unfaithfulness to the Lord to a marriage, to a family and we think, "well it won't cost that much." How does Satan tempt the believer and then ship wrecked is their testimony, their ministry, and their family.

What are some things we need to learn out of this? Here's the first one about the tempter and temptation. Satan tempts. That's not all he does. He has a number of titles in the Bible. This past week I went to do a missions conference and a leadership training seminar at one of our sister churches that have been through Embers to a Flame, at College Station, Texas where Texas A&M is and a number of other things. Also President George Bush the first has his library there. One of the elders there is a key archivist so he took me behind the scenes and I got to go where you had to get clearance to go. When I was talking with some of those people I said, "Does President Bush the first and his wife Barbara ever get here?" They said, "Oh yes, they actually have a little apartment here, they live here almost about a third of the year sometimes. He may even show up while you're here." I said, "I didn't tell him I was coming but I'll look for him." Then they began to tell me that they had code names for them where they each had a code name. Then of course, they get to see them all the time up there. They also have nicknames. I'm not going to tell you President George Bush's nickname but I am going to tell you Barbara's nickname. Her nickname is the enforcer. Nothing happens to her husband that she doesn't want to happen. Nothing gets carried away with her because she's the enforcer.

The Bible does that with Satan. First of all, clearly the Bible is teaching and Jesus is affirming that Satan is not a concept. Satan is not a personification of evil for conceptual awareness. Satan is not an idea. Satan is a person, a fallen angel. Satan is not a theory, not a force but a person with personality who has schemes and you are not to be ignorant of him but neither are you to be preoccupied with him. He has many titles. He is called the murderer and we saw that back in Bethlehem, didn't we? We saw that in the days of the birth of Moses, didn't we? We see that in our own society - the holocaust among the unborn, the culture of death that surrounds us at birth and now at the end of people's lives. We see it in the infant nurseries where less-than-perfect children are born. We know he is a murderer. He's called a liar. He's called a deceiver. He's called the tempter because that's his number one scheme is to tempt.

The second thing I want you to see is that not only is Satan the tempter but Satan tempts incessantly, intelligently and continuously. I like to put it this way in terms of the tempter. He is a spiritual judo expert. In karate you bring force against someone. In boxing you bring force against someone. Judo is a whole science of self-defense that is built on the momentum and strength of the person you're facing. You take their moves and use those moves against them for their demise. Satan loves to say, "Are you hungry? Here, let's make it all about you.

Let's don't eat to live for God's glory, let's live to eat for yourself. Let's don't live to drink for God's glory, let's live to drink for yourself. Sex which is God's wonderful gift for marriage, let's don't use it holy and sacred in the marriage bed. Let's just use it in any bed with anybody in any way - promiscuity, immorality, and perversion, because really it's what do you want to do?" The tempter is coming incessantly using valid appetites for invalid fulfillment. The tempter comes in moments where we are most susceptible. You hungry? You lonely? You frustrated?

Here are three things that Satan loves to use. He loves to use fear, fatigue and frustration because in those three moments we are the most vulnerable. Then the judo expert, Satan, takes our own momentum to draw us slowly but surely into the ensnarement of addiction and idolatry. Here is the way he works continuously that there is one more thing. You can have an even better insight here. Remember the passage that

says, "do not love the world nor the things in the world, for all that is in the world (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life)" (1 John 2:15, 16)? Did you see that what Jesus when he said are you hungry which is an appetite, a lust of the flesh? Satan used the lust of the flesh when he said, "If you're the Son of God then your gratification is all that should really matter." He used the lust of the eyes when he said, "Hey Jesus, look at all these kingdoms! I'll give them to you." He used the boastful pride of life when he said, "Jesus, aren't you the Son of God? So cast yourself down and prove it." Satan uses this in so many different ways - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life.

My favorite example of this and I have used it before is how many diets do you think have been broken now since January 1? One of the moments that it gets broken is when one says, "I'm gonna have a low-carb diet. I'm going to have an Atkins diet. I'm going to have a South Beach diet." Let me tell you at least one possibility of when we lose them. We go to a restaurant, we sit down and they put in front of us a menu. On that menu are pictures, "Oh that's an accident isn't?" The pictures are of what they want you to buy. You look at those pictures and carbs just flee out the window. We say, "Well, just one little meal, just one little 5000 calorie meal. That's no problem." Wouldn't you like for just once in your life after you have struck the deal for the meal that came out of the kitchen to vaguely resemble the picture on the menu? But it never does. Satan paints picture after picture with the lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh and by the way it's all about you and the boastful pride of life.

There is no organ of communication Satan does not use to tempt you. It could be the Internet, computers, television, movies, songs, CDs, plays, paintings, books and everything. Nothing is without an agenda and a world and life view. Satan loves to take commercials and sitcoms to get you laughing then the unthinkable will become thinkable. Once the unthinkable is thinkable then it becomes doable



and when it becomes doable it becomes acceptable. It all starts with jokes in a play or movie or painting or something about sexual perversion or sexual morality and we laugh but the defenses are going down and the unthinkable now becomes thinkable and then doable and then acceptable and then embraced and approvable in all of society. Commercials are one of Satan's favorites, right? The thing that we couldn't wait to all run home and see at the Super Bowl was commercials. One may say, "Harry, it's just a 30 second commercial" that people pay \$30 million for because it doesn't have an impact on your life. What silly people.

Can I prove this to you? For some of you this is so far beyond you but I want you to hear this. Those of you who know this answer it. L.S.M.F.T. stands for "Lucky strike means fine tobacco." Winston tastes good...like a cigarette should. Neither one of those ads have been used for 40 years but most people know the answer. By the way we think this doesn't impact us. You deserve a break today, why don't you have it your way? Everything, every program has an agenda to it. What do we do with temptation and the tempter? Here's what we do. We pray and we flee. We pray and we flee and we fill. One may be thinking, "Harry, do you fight temptation." You flee temptation and then fight Satan. You were not allowed to flee Satan. The Bible says resist him and he will flee from you (James 4:7). Flee temptation, fight Satan.

How can I flee temptation? First of all you need to pray, "Lord, lead me not into temptation. Help me to see those designs for my destruction and I will walk around those landmines in my life. I don't want my family blown up. I don't want my ministry blown

up. I don't want my life blown up. I don't want my witness blown up. I'll walk away from it. I won't resist temptation but I will flee it. I will resist Satan." How do I resist Satan? You need to get filled up. The best way to resist Satan is to get filled up with the love of God, get filled up with the Spirit of God, get filled up with the Word of God and there is no room for Satan to hook into a vacuum that's there. Get filled up with a love for your wife, a love for your husband so there is no room to dabble in a chat room. There is no room to go out searching on a Internet.

How do I know if Satan has got to a hook into me? Here is what you will always see. If Satan has got a hook into you, you will find an emptiness in your life. Secondly, there will be unexplained anger in your life. Thirdly, you'll get a secret life, another password, another computer, another charge account. There will always be the secret life. So get filled up with the Lord and then you won't sell out for a trinket. Isn't it amazing what we sell out for? Eve sold out for a piece of fruit. Esau sold out for a bowl of soup. Some sell out for a night in a motel room. Some sell out for six hours in front of a computer.

I want you to know something. If you fall into temptation and you sin against the Lord there is forgiveness. So flee. One may be thinking, "Harry what if I do it

more than once?" Seventy times seven, there is forgiveness. Flee to the Lord, forgiveness is free but I also would be wrong if I didn't tell you there can be consequences and scars. So while I want to invite you back to Jesus if you have gotten caught there and the Lord can use that to turn it into something positive in your life, I also want you to know that the route of following Jesus out of love by saying "I love you so much Lord I don't have room for this, I love my wife so much I don't have room for this, I love my marriage so much I don't have room for this, I love my children so much I don't want somebody else raising my children, I want you Lord and I want everything that you have that I might serve you with all that I have. That's what I want Lord."

There is no doubt about what is going on in this text. Jesus is not only revealing to us the tempter and how he even uses the Bible. The place where Satan does most of his work is from pulpits. He does most of his work inside churches. He uses gossip and slander among the membership and false teachings from the leadership. It's amazing what he does, just like he uses the Word against the living Savior out of context so he does it time and time again. But in the midst of this here is what I want you to see in conclusion.

Jesus has revealed for us something glorious about Himself. It's no accident that the Spirit led Him to the wilderness. Who else had been readied in the wilderness to come and liberate the land of promise? It was the people of Israel for 40 years. Clearly Matthew is telling us something. The One who came to Israel, like Israel, was prepared out of the wilderness to come and redeem us. By the way how did sin get here? It came through Adam and Adam succumbed to temptation. In Genesis chapter 3 when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, the lust of the flesh, that it was desirable to the eye, it was a delight to the eyes and that she could be like God which is the boastful pride of life. Then she took from the fruit and she ate and gave to her husband with her and he ate. Where were they? They were in a garden with everything they needed.

Where is the second Adam? By a man came death, by a man is coming life, Jesus. Where is He? He is not in a garden. He is in the wilderness. He is not with good food, He is with 40 days of fasting. But with the Spirit of God and the Word of God He wins the battle. Unmistakably, Matthew is telling you here is the One prepared to save you.

Here is the One tested to save you. Here is the New Adam that brings you life. Do you want to stand? Certainly, then flee temptation. Pray and fill up your life with the Gospel of grace and the things that God loves. But if you want to stand then fix your eyes on Jesus. You have a High Priest that has entered into the heavens who now intercedes for you and who is able to comfort you for He has been tempted at every point, like unto you yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15). Matthew is telling you that you have a Redeemer. It is Christ. Fix your eyes on Him.

I have never yet met anyone who is able to stand in the day of temptation without fixing their eyes on Jesus. There are no gimmicks to it. There are all kinds of things I'd be glad to help you with on accountability, nurture and all of that but you stand when you fix your eyes on Jesus. He is the One who has won the victory. He is the One with the way of escape. It is Christ alone. I have never met any who have escaped by Christ that have ever regretted it. I have never met anyone who said, "You know, Pastor, by God's grace I was able to flee temptation and the designs of sin didn't lay on my life and oh how I regret that. I wish I had fallen into temptation." I have never met anyone who said that. For 30 something years as a pastor the landscape is littered with people who have fallen into temptation and sin and the wreckage of their witness, their testimony, their family and their marriage happened. God's gracious forgiveness was there but there was wreckage that didn't need to be there. Come, fix your eyes on Jesus. He will win in the wilderness and He'll win at Calvary. He will save you from your sins. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the moments we could be together in Your Word. Thank You for the privilege to examine it and to study it and to embrace it. God would You please guide us? Holy Spirit, take that which we have examined and place it upon our hearts. Friend, if Satan has tempted you to deny Christ as Lord and Savior and to flee somewhere else, all it is, is emptiness. It's nothing but vanity. But there is a Savior who will deliver you and give you hope for evermore. Come to Him. May I invite you to Him? I invite you to pray as you commit your life to Him and my brothers and sisters who know Him, fix your eyes on Him. He has won the victory over the tempter. Lord, thank You for these moments together in this study. We bless Your Name, in the Name of Christ, Amen.

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