

Sermon Study Guide

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THE MAIN THING: The Temptation Trap (Part 3): Compromise

The worship of God allows us to overcome the temptation to compromise our faith.

PURSUE RELATIONSHIP: *Opportunities to connect and pray as a group*

1. As you reflect on your week, what sources of temptation have you been aware of? (your workplace, shopping, TV, etc.)
2. What excuses do we or others usually give for yielding to temptation?
3. What 'worship' song is your favourite? Why?

PURSUE GOD: *Time that is devoted to the Word of God*

1. How does the analogy that Paul uses in 1 Timothy 6:12 give the Christ-follower an understanding of the Christian life? (Refer to 1 Peter 5:8)
2. Pastor Ashwin described Temptations 1 and 2 as 'subtle.' (Matt 4:1-7) How were they seemingly harmless? How were they dangerous?
3. How was Satan's offer to Jesus a temptation of compromise? (Matt 4:8-10) If Jesus had chosen compromise, what would the consequences have been?
4. What was it that Peter, the crowds and the priests wanted Jesus to do? (Matt 16:23; Matt 27:40, 42) What is the significance of Paul's response in Col 2:15?
5. How were the three keys to resisting temptation (Word, Identity, Worship) demonstrated in Christ's ministry?

PURSUE MISSION: *Seek to be the community of God's people in your community*

APPLICATION

1. **Idea:** Commit to memory the verses Jesus used in His temptation: Deuteronomy 8:3; 6:16; 6:13.
2. What can 'fighting the good fight' mean for you this week? Which temptation trap (Independence, Manipulation, or Compromise) are you more likely to yield to /fall into?
3. Reflect on 1 Corinthians 10:13 and Ephesians 6:10-18. How do these two Scriptures provide strength to overcome the temptation trap?

Book resource:

Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power; and the Only Hope that Matters, Timothy Keller

THE WORD (NIV)

Matthew 4:8-10

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Matthew 16:23

²³ Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

Matthew 27:40, 42

⁴⁰ and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!" ... ⁴² "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him."

1 Corinthians 10:13

¹³ No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted^[b] beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted,^[c] he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

Colossians 2:15

¹⁵ And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

1 Timothy 6:12

¹² Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

1 Peter 5:8

⁸ Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Sermon Study Summary

The first two temptations of Jesus were very subtle. At first glance, neither turning stones into bread, nor jumping off the top of the temple, appear to be serious sins. But wrapped inside these subtle temptations were the offers of independence and manipulation. In contrast, the third temptation was not subtle at all; it was a call to compromise Christ's willingness to carry out his Father's mission. Satan is the enemy of the human soul; he deceived the human race into sin and rebellion against God. And he works with such passion and indignation to deceive humans in order that we might live in defiance to the ways of God. This great struggle manifests in the world and in the lives of Christians today, whether we recognize it or not. As much as there is a battle, the Bible also clearly tells us how this struggle will end; we get this unmistakable picture of the triumph of Christ and the Church and the vanquishing of the enemy.

It is stunning to see how many times various temptations come so steadily, relentlessly, all through the day calling us to compromise our faith, and for the most part, we don't even recognize it. For even truth can be twisted in order to make Satan's offer sound attractive and harmless even though it was in direct rebellion against God's laws. That's what Satan does today; casual statements that sound good on the surface that we don't perceive their underlying errors that call us to compromise our Christian convictions. Tim Keller addresses about our modern day idols in his book *Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex and Power, and the Only Hope That Matters*. Keller writes: "What is an idol? It is anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything that you seek to give you what only God can give. A counterfeit god is anything so central and essential to your life that, should you lose it, your life would feel hardly worth living." The devil uses these false gods as a bait to cause us to compromise our faith and confidence in God.

The first key to overcoming temptation is the power of the Word. We have go back to the Word of God and build our lives, our families and our society on the Bible's unshakable foundations. *The second key to overcoming temptation is the power of our identity in Christ.* We have to rest confident on the fact that we are God's beloved children, loved deeply and unconditionally; the Lord's affirmation is all we need.

The third key to overcoming temptation is the power of worship. In Matthew 4:10, Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'" Now what we worship we will also serve. The word "worship" is derived from the Old English word "worthship." When we worship God, we are proclaiming God's worth. True worship, therefore, signifies the priority we place on God in our life. Worship is also an invitation to intimacy with God. As A.W. Tozer once said, "The whole import and substance of the Bible teaches us that the God who does not need anything nevertheless desires the adoration and worship of His created children." Furthermore, in the Hebrew Old Testament, the primary word for worship means "to bow down in reverence and submission," and in the New Testament, the most common Greek word for worship means "to come forward to kiss the hand." Worship alone unites reverence and intimacy together.

When we worship God, our admiration and wonder for God fills us with delight and joy and all of a sudden the seductions and enchantments of the world lose their charm. When we are starving from hunger, everything in the menu looks appetizing. In the same way, a person who is starving spiritually will find the counterfeit gods to be attractive. But when our hearts are deeply satisfied in God, we start seeing the counterfeit gods as what they really are - worthless. The mark of a Christian is, therefore, one of worship. True worship is reflected in lives that have submitted to the Lordship of Christ and demonstrate His worth. These are the keys to resisting temptation: God's word, our identity in Christ, and our worship to God. Thus, worship is a declaration: when we worship we confess that Yahweh, the triune God, alone is worthy. When we worship God, we proclaim that we belong to Him. When we worship, we announce God's victory over the devil and sin; that is the destiny of the enemy of our soul! This ravaging devouring beast, who seeks to assault the people of God, will be crushed under our feet and destroyed completely.