

MATTHEW 4:12-16

A. We have been looking at the temptation (testing of Christ). We can see how and when temptation comes our way through the example of Christ. It shows when one is normally vulnerable or weakest.

1. After a spiritual high (3:16-17). It is when we least expect it.
2. When we are physically weakened (no food for 40 days).
*With us, it is when we have an illness or a difficult stressful period.
3. When we are alone, feeling that we are by ourselves without any support.

B. Question? How does Satan tempt us (a few things)?

1. He tries to get us to distrust God. "If thou be", "Hath God said"
*Satan works at getting us to doubt God's will about our lives, marriage, problems, needs, and security.
2. He tries to get us to presume on God. (jump-angels)
*At times we expect God to bless us, protect us and meet our needs - while we are living hit-and-miss in our faithfulness to God. (Gal. 6:7)
3. He tries to get us to abandon God's will and way. (Kingdoms are yours if You bow to me.)
*At times believers turn from God and try to live in our own strength, our own wisdom, our own way, and by our own time schedule (short cuts).

Note: There are **no** short cuts to Holy Spirit empowerment, true godly success, God's purpose for our lives, a good testimony, or Bible knowledge and application.

*It takes effort, obedience, study, perseverance, the Word, prayer, church, other believers, and God!

Proverbs 3:5-6 - Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.
Pro. 3:6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Hebrews 11:6 - But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

C. Question? Was it possible for Jesus Christ, as a human, to sin?

- *Some say that Jesus Christ was without sin, but He was not without susceptibility to evil temptation.
- *They say the potential-possibility for Him to sin was in His humanity. Since Jesus was fully human, He
- *could have chosen to sin like other humans.

Answer:

1. Jesus' 100% human nature-body does not exist, nor operate, apart from His 100% divine nature.

Colossians 2:9 - For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

2. Jesus had no inward sin or depravity with which to struggle. His sinless human nature was/is always **subservient** to His divine nature and will. There was no conflict and they were **always** in harmony.
3. For Christ to have sinned, His sinless human nature would have to **oppose** His divine nature and will.
*He would have to apostatize from Himself (**impossible**).
4. Remember, one's will always must act-follow-yield to one's being or character. Christ's sinless human nature-will is **not** depraved, is separate from sin, and could **never** act contrary to Who He truly was and is, **God!**
5. Some say (and wrongly) that Jesus' humanity was no different than Adam's before the fall. That is **not** true!

*Remember, one's humanness cannot be separated from who one is as a person.

- a. Adam was mutable or changeable. Christ **never** changes and is immutable.
 - b. Adam could choose to sin - he did and failed. Christ could **not** sin and never did sin.
 - c. Adam was created and not eternal. Christ is eternal and came by way of **in**carnation.
 - d. Adam is not the only one of his kind. Christ is the only begotten (unique) Son. *He only is **one** of a kind.
 - e. Adam's and Christ's natures were not the same. Adam's perfection cannot be like Christ's because Adam's is finite and Christ's is **in**finite.
6. Remember, in Jesus' conception, the human participation was completely **ex**cluded. This helps us to understand the **total** absence of any contamination in the person and life of Jesus Christ.
 - a. *Christ's conception and humanity stands **out**side of Adam's sin - depravity, fallenness, and ordinary genetic generation.

Luke 1:35 - [And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.]

b. To say that Jesus could have sinned is to say **God** could have sinned. Impossible!

c. Remember:

John 8:46 - Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

II Corinthians 5:21 - For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

I Peter 2:22 - Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

I John 3:5 - And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

Christ was completely separated from sin because there was no sin in Him. He could **not sin!

7. Also understand, Satan's evil temptations-enticements must attach to something **within** the individual that causes one to yield to sin.

James 1:14 - But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

Jeremiah 17:9 - The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

- a. But this is not so with Christ.

John 14:30 - Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

Hebrews 7:26 - For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

James 1:13 - Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

*God's divineness makes Him **incapable** of being enticed by sin. There is nothing within Christ for **sin** to attach to.

- b. Some say, what about Hebrews 4:15 - [For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, *yet* without sin.]
- (1) Context: [in all points] [our infirmities] It is not referring to **sin**, but to the difficulties - tribulations - sufferings - and frailties of the human nature.
- (2) *[like as we are] Christ became flesh and blood, but His miraculous **virgin birth** protected Him from depravity and the desire to sin.

8. Again remember, even though Jesus is also human, He is **one** person with **two** natures. His divine nature, His Godness, controls His sinless human nature. Thus His human nature (body-mind) never acts independently of His divine Godness.

- a. So when Christ was tempted with sin (Matthew 4-life), sin had **no** chance of alluring Him (James 1:13 - God cannot be tempted with evil).
- b. Hebrews 4:15 is saying that Jesus was tested, tried, and proven in all areas just like we are with difficulties, hunger, thirst, **weariness**, and persecution.

9. Some say that if Jesus could not have sinned, then His temptation could not be viewed as **real**. They say that temptation implies the possibility of sin (wrong!).

Answer: God the Father's challenge to Satan was to demonstrate to him and the world that **no** temptations, testings, or trials thrown at Jesus could ever succeed. They would only see sinlessness in Jesus and absolute oneness-unity in Jesus' two holy natures.

- a. Romans 7:22-23 - For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: Rom. 7:23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

*In man, we find two laws. But in Christ, there is only one law - **God** perfection.

- b. Jesus Christ did not sin because there was no sin **in** Him! Jesus' tests-temptations were not to see if Jesus could sin, but they were to show and prove that He could **not**!

****The only time Jesus Christ ever identified with sin (never in His birth or life) was when He gave His spotless sacrifice on His cross. Even then, it wasn't His sin (sinless) but **our** sins. He took our sin with its penalty (death) upon Himself.**

D. Matthew 4:12-16 - Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; Matt. 4:13 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: Matt. 4:14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Matt. 4:15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, *by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;* Matt. 4:16 The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.

1. John's ministry was now completed. His ministry in Judea, the land and country of a king, was **over**. His preaching had gotten him thrown into prison. This action of Israel's leaders Jesus interpreted as Israel's **rejection** of Him as Messiah. It is at this point that Jesus withdrew Himself from the national aspect of Israel. No longer will He call the nation. But from now on, He will appeal to **individuals**. The nation rejected Christ **long before the cross**.

2. Why did Jesus go into Galilee (North Israel)?

Answer: He went there to get His **disciples**. Eleven are from Galilee. He also wanted to **instruct** them (Little Flock), so there would be an understanding of His governmental structure of His Kingdom.

*Remember, Christ did not consider Israel, with its apostate leaders, a **nation**. So take both of these things with the following verses:

Matthew 21:43 - Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

Luke 12:32 - Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Matthew 19:28 - And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Romans 10:19 - But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.

Acts 4:13 - Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

John 7:1 - After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

*John 7:1 shows Him withdrawing, running from, and **hiding** at times.

3. There will be another opportunity for Israel to **reconsider** their stand of unbelief. Christ will offer Himself again as their Messiah in **early** Acts after Pentecost. This offer of Israel's Messiah, the Kingdom offer, will be made by the **12** and not the Lord. He had to ascend into heaven in order to **send** the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8).

*Israel's only hope would be for her to repent.

4. We will see when John the Baptist ministered in Judea, he held the crowds in awe. [Kingdom at hand] was on the **offensive**. But Jesus, in Galilee, would be on the **defensive** as He continues, while inviting others to also withdraw from apostate Israel and believe in Him.

Note: The **time** frame here is a little off, but John fills in **two** years of Christ's ministry and of John's ministry (more on this later), to here in Galilee.

5. A **key** evidence that the Kingdom to Israel had been temporarily **suspended** during His Galilean ministry is that you cannot find one reference to water baptism. From John's imprisonment to after Christ's resurrection and early Acts, we do not find any**one** being baptized.

Why? Israel had rejected the forerunner's message, temporarily suspending the nation's opportunity of the Kingdom. Water baptism **resumes** in early Acts when God is dealing with the nation again (Acts 3-7).

E. Questions?

1. When does Satan often attack us?
2. Explain Jesus as the God-man.
3. Why couldn't Jesus sin?
4. Was Jesus' temptation real? How?
5. What happened when John the Baptist was imprisoned?
6. What happened to John's ministry?
7. What happened to national Israel?