

# Matthew 4:8-11. the Third Temptation of Christ.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

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*Jesus overcame the third temptation by appealing to the command of God, teaching us to resist Satan's temptations and seek obedience to God.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 4:10, John 12:42, Philippians 4:7, 1 Timothy 5:6, 1 Timothy 6:10, Hebrews 4:15

**Topics:** "Temptation Of Christ", "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

Favell Lee Mortimer preaches about the persistence of Satan in tempting us, using examples from the Bible where individuals resisted one temptation but fell into another. He emphasizes the need to be watchful and prepared for subsequent attacks after overcoming one temptation. Jesus overcame the last temptation by using the word of God as the sword of the Spirit, showing us how to combat Satan's temptations by appealing to God's commands and not giving in to worldly pleasures, profits, or praise.

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## Transcript

Though Jesus had resisted two temptations, Satan was not dismayed. Here we have an instance of the persistence of our great enemy. Though he may have failed in one attempt to injure us, he will make another, and sometimes he succeeds better the second time than he did the first.

Balaam resisted the first temptation, and refused to go with Balak's messengers; but he was tempted a second time, and then he yielded. The man of God from Judah refused the invitation of Jeroboam, but was enticed by the solicitation of the old prophet. Satan was not discouraged when Job was patient under his first trials--he asked God to permit him to assault him again; but that second time he still failed to tempt Job to curse his God. We ought to learn, from these facts, to be very watchful after we have overcome one temptation, and to be ready for another attack.

There is one circumstance in the third temptation which may surprise us. Satan proposed a more glaring sin to our Lord than he had proposed before; for it is a much more glaring sin to fall down and worship Satan than to turn stones into bread, or to run unnecessarily into danger. How could Satan suppose that when Jesus had refused to commit those sins, he would consent to so flagrant a transgression as worshipping the devil? Perhaps he saw that it was vain to try to deceive our Savior; therefore he declared his purpose, and hoped to persuade by the greatness of the bribe. He had not offered him such a reward before, as the kingdoms of the world--he had ruined the first Adam by promising him a reward for disobedience, and he hoped to ruin the second Adam by the same means.

What is that character of the kingdoms of the world which Satan displayed before our Lord?

It may be divided into three principal points--pleasure, profit, and praise--these tempt men to forsake God's service. It is not true that Satan can give them to whom he will. When Satan offered them to Christ, he offered what it was not in his power to bestow. In saying that he could bestow them, he acted in his own character of a liar and the father of lies. It is, however, true, that God often permits the servants of Satan to enjoy the vain delights of this world--thus we read in the Psalms, that the wicked are often in prosperity.

How did Jesus overcome the last temptation? By the word of God, which is the sword of the Spirit. He spoke openly to Satan, and declared that God had commanded that men should worship him alone. He did not dispute with the tempter, or tell him that the world was not his to bestow, or that it was a perishing portion, but he simply appealed to the command of God. Thus we are taught how to meet Satan's temptations. We ought not to stand questioning; but we should remember the command of God, and not take any step in life, or follow any course which will lead us into sin. How many warnings are there in the Scriptures against the love of the world, its pleasures, its profit, and its praise! This is what the Scripture says of worldly pleasure, (1 Tim. 5:6,) "She that lives in pleasure, is dead while she lives."

One of our most faithful female missionaries, Mrs. Judson, was first awakened when a vain and worldly girl, by reading this sentence. Afterwards she went to the East, and suffered great persecution for the truth's sake, and now she is with God, drinking rivers of pleasure at his right hand. And what does the Scripture say against the love of profit, or of money? 1 Tim. 6:10. "Which, (that is, money,) while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

Now hear what is said of those who seek human praise. We read in John 12:42, 43, of some who believed in Christ, and yet would not confess him, lest they would be put out of the synagogue; "for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

Satan will offer these things to our acceptance, (not all of them, but little portions of them,) upon condition that we worship him, that is, do his will in some respect; for he cares not for knee-worship; he knows that we are really the servants of him whom we obey, and not of him whom we call Master. May the Lord give us grace to resist, through our Captain, who has overcome, and has sat down upon his throne.

How soon the blessed Savior found obedience to be sweet! The angels came, and fed him. Thus God will more than make up to us, even in this life, all we give up for his sake. When he has filled our hearts with the peace which passes all understanding, we shall not regret the loss of any earthly thing!

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