

Matthew 4:1-11

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness
to be **tempted (tested/tried)** by the devil.

²He fasted forty days and forty nights,
and afterwards he was famished.

--- ³The tempter came and said to him, "***If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.***"

⁴But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

--- ⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city
and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶saying 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,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"***

⁷Jesus said to him, "Again it is written,
Do not put the Lord your God to the *test*."

--- ⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all
the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; ⁹and he said to him,
"All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."

¹⁰Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written,
'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

¹¹Then the devil left him,
and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

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Sermon Notes

"Testing Jesus" – Matthew 4:1-11

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Ash Wednesday, February 18, 2015

1. Two Confusing Phrases in our Liturgy

a. Apostles' Creed: "*Holy Catholic Church*"

-- "Catholic" means universal not "Roman Catholic"

b. Lord's Prayer: "*Lead us not into temptation*"

2. Greek "peirasmos"

means *tempting*, or *testing*, or *trial*

3. Early Christians expected Testing and Temptation

a. For Sanctification – James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:3-7

To purify their lives

b. As Part of the Battle – 1 Peter 5:8-9

The Devil was real and was fighting to destroy

(a) their lives

(b) their allegiance to God

(c) their effectiveness for God

4. Jesus was Tested and Tempted

a. Matthew 4:1-11 -- Jesus' 40 days in the desert

Reminds us of Israel's 40 years in the desert

Leads the Church to the "40 days in Lent"

b. Jesus' Temptation was God's means

by which Jesus could experience our humanity (Hebrews 4:14-15)

c. Jesus's Temptation was the devil's attempt

to destroy his sinlessness

to destroy the effectiveness of his death for our sin

d. Jesus was Tempted to

1. Doubt his identity as “Son of God”
2. Take shortcuts to win our allegiance
3. Listen to the devil’s voice, not God’s
4. Rip Scripture out of context
5. To forget Scripture as a whole

e. Jesus resists Temptation

He has no Bible

He knows God’s word in his head and heart!

5. Our Faith Will Be Tested Too

If the first Christians were tempted; and

If Jesus was tempted – so too will we be...

SO... “*Lead us not into temptation*”

Cannot mean

“*Please let me have a life free from temptation, trial or trouble*”

But must mean the same as the next line:

“*Deliver us from evil*”

Our Ash Wednesday and Lenten Prayer is

“Lord, we are weak, we are nothing but dust and ashes, prone to sin:

In these days,

Do not lead us into “the grip of” temptation

-- The place where we fail the test

-- The place where temptation weakens us, not strengthens us

-- The place where evil wins.

But, in these days, by your Spirit,

Lead us into any temptation, or trial, or test,

-- That will strengthen and renew our faith

-- That will help us be more Christ-like

-- That will make us love God more

-- That will make us more effective for You

1 Peter 1:3-7

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

⁴and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading,
kept in heaven for you, ⁵Who are being protected by the power of
God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last
time.

⁶In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer
various **trials/tests/temptations**,

⁷so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold
that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in
praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

James 1:2-4

²My brothers and sisters, whenever you face **trials/tests/temptations** of
any kind, consider it nothing but joy,

³because you know that the *testing* (purifying?) of your faith
produces endurance; ⁴and let endurance have its full effect,
so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing.

1 Peter 5:8-9

⁸Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the
devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. ⁹Resist him,
steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all
the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering.

1 Corinthians 10:12-14

12So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall.

13No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone.

God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength,
but with the testing he will also provide the way out
so that you may be able to endure it.

Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our
weaknesses, but we have one [Jesus, the Son of God] who in every
respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin.