

20) Last, but not least, is Satan, who let pride be his downfall from heaven and the presence of God. (**Isaiah 14:12-15**) While Jesus was in the wilderness being tempted by the devil, Jesus always quoted scripture to defend Himself from the devil. Jesus was able to resist all of the devil's temptations because Jesus not only knew the Scriptures, but He also obeyed the Scriptures. In **Ephesians 6:10-18**, it says for us to be strong in the Lord and to put on the full armor of God so we can stand against the devil's schemes. Knowing the Bible as Christians is an important part in helping us to resist the attacks from the devil. As Christians, today and tomorrow, let us know God's Word as we should and let us always apply it to our daily lives. When you are being attacked by the devil always use God's Word to defend yourself. For in **Hosea 4:6** it says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life is a deadly combination for all of us who let ourselves get caught up in this trap. The devil has been

using this combination against mankind since man was created from Adam and Eve to the present day. Instead of relying on our own strength, as Christians, we need to rely upon God's strength and His Word. (**Proverbs 3:5**)

By Bill Davis

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Faithful Sayings

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It Is Written

How many times have we found ourselves in the position where the devil is trying to entice us with temptations such as those found in **Matthew 4:1-9**? All of us have been there more than once during our lives; the devil will try to circumvent the situation so we will give him the credit or give in to his temptations. When we worship the devil by obeying him instead of keeping our faith toward God and doing God's will, we have fallen to the temptations of the devil. Have you ever noticed that our closest friends, family members, associates we work with, or weak Christians will sometimes present attractive and convincing reasons why we should be involved in something we both know is wrong before God? Our closest friends may even find some verses in the Bible that appear to support their weak view. You see, even the devil knows what the Bible has to say, the only problem is that he does not live by God's Word. The devil misused the Scriptures to try to convince Jesus to sin and believe his lies. There are three types of temptations that the devil has used from the beginning of mankind. These are the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. He has used these three temptations with great success on mankind. (**I John 2:15-17**)

As we look back to **Matthew 4**, we see that the first temptation the devil used as a basis for tempting Jesus was an appeal to the real physical needs Jesus had at that moment. You see, at this time, Jesus was very hungry and weak due to His fasting for forty days. Jesus chose not to use His divine power to satisfy His natural desires for daily food. Food is good for the body, but

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10:20 a.m.
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Dean Bowers
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this was neither the time nor the way for Jesus to satisfy His physical hunger. Jesus had fasted forty days and nights in the desert. Jesus had the power to change stones into bread but He resisted the devil and overcame the temptation by answering, "It is written." Jesus used the Word of God to resist the devil. If we had the power that Jesus had, would that have been a temptation for us? Most of us would have used this power to satisfy our desires; we would have failed the test. We, as Christians, will face temptation from the devil. God has given us His Word. In this country, we are blessed to have the Bible readily available to read. Do we study, meditate upon His Word, and apply it to our daily lives? Can we reply, "It is written?"

As Christians, we may be tempted to satisfy a normal desire in a wrong way or at the wrong time. In our culture, fornication serves as a good example of this. The standards of the world have influenced many to disregard God's Word concerning marriage and the relationship of husband and wife. (**Matt. 19:2-11; Eph. 5:22-23; I Cor. 7:1-5; Heb. 13:4**) Today, fornication is acceptable by the standards of the world. However, God said, "Don't do it." When we choose to follow Satan's way, we sin against God. God knows what is best for us. Satan only wishes to do us harm. There will be serious problems in the relationship when couples get involved in the wrong way or off to a bad start. Adultery can damage or even destroy marriages. Satan's way often has a pleasing appearance, but in the end, his way always brings heartache and spiritual death. When we choose Satan's way, we have separated ourselves from God and will suffer eternally if we do

not repent. Satan does not have partners, he has only victims!

Another good example is that of drinking alcohol or taking drugs to get a short term high with a lifetime of misery and pain. One of the weakest views a lot of those in the world today and even many weak Christians will take is on the matter of social drinking. In **Luke 5:27** Jesus was accused of eating and drinking with sinners and in **I Timothy 5:23** Paul told Timothy to stop drinking water only and use a little wine because of his stomach. Both of these examples in the Bible are taken out of their original context for the Bible has many scriptures condemning drinking alcohol. Thirst is a natural physical desire. There are many acceptable ways to satisfy thirst. We do not need to drink alcohol, with its harmful effects, and sin against God. Also, as Christians, when we engage in social drinking, we send the wrong signal to those who are weak in the Lord. A lot of our desires are normal and good, but God wants all of us to satisfy our desires in the right way and at the right time, and that is by God's way. You see, the devil will use our real needs as the basis for temptations and he will cause doubts that will make the temptations real. The devil is always looking for a potential weakness where he can exploit our weakness for his gain. Often we may succumb to the lust of the flesh because of the idea that, "I have to touch it just to see how it feels."

In the life of Eve, we see another example of the three ways the devil will use to tempt us. (**Genesis 3:1-7**) Eve looked, she took, she ate, and she gave. The battle is often lost at the first glance. Temptation will often begi-

n by simply looking at something that you desire and you don't let the common sense that God gave you warn you to run away from something that will get you into trouble. In **II Timothy 2:22**, Paul gave a young man this advice - run from those things that will produce evil thoughts. In **Matthew 4** we see that the devil misused the very Scriptures of God to try to persuade Jesus to sin. Sometimes friends or other Christians will try to present an attractive and very convincing reason why you should try to do something that you know full well is wrong. Our close friends may try to even find in the Bible some verses that will seem to back up their viewpoint to get you to do something that you know is wrong. As Christians, we all need to study the Bible very carefully so we all will know and understand God's laws for holy living and what He wants for His people. Only if you really understand what the entire Bible says, will you be able to recognize and interpret the errors of those around us who try to use false interpretations of the Bible and who will try to take certain verses out of their contexts and twist them to say what they want them to say. In this country, we see a lot of TV preachers who will try to sell a "feel good" sermon to those with itching ears. They appear to be godly men, but if those who are listening would just listen to what these men are saying, and if those listening to these men really know the Bible, they will see that these preachers are not what they claim to be. This is the reason, as Christians, we need to study the Bible and apply it to our lives as seen in

Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge.

The third temptation that the devil tried to use on Jesus was the pride of life. The definition of pride, according to *Vine's Dictionary*, is "to boast, vainglory, haughty and high-minded." In other words, it's all about self. Have you ever noticed that pride has been the number one downfall of a good many men in the Bible and in the history of mankind? We see a lot of public officials who seem to think they are above the law only to go to prison. We see the super stars in sports who get caught in the mind set that they can do anything they please only to be embarrassed when they go to prison or are told they cannot play sports any more. In the Bible we can read about many good people who let pride blind their eyes and think they were better than they were; they gave glory to themselves instead of God. In **Genesis 3:6** we find that Eve was deceived into thinking she could eat the fruit that God told her and Adam not to eat. She desired to be as wise as God. They listened to the devil and they got hurt by it. (**Genesis 3:4-6**) In **Daniel 4**, we see a time when Nebuchadnezzar's heart became too proud as the king and gave all the glory to himself and not to God which caused him to have hard times. (**Daniel 4:28-32**) In **II Chronicles**, we read about a young man named Uzziah who did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, but over time, when he became powerful, his pride led to his downfall with leprosy. (**II Chronicles 26:16-**