**Every Doctrine that Comes from the Mouth of God**

Based on [Matthew 4:1-11](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Mt4.1-11)

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One of the central life lesson that parents try to teach their children is delayed gratification. Another word for it is patience. Working and waiting for the payoff, rather than trying to seize it prematurely--that’s something children don’t understand naturally. *Patience is characteristic of wisdom, and it is learned mainly through experience.* **It is why the old practice it and the young, generally lack it and have to add on the years before they learn wisdom. “Good things come to those who wait.”**  That idea makes more sense to those who have lived longer, and had to wait in this life. And faith in God is patience, trusting that--though there are many dangers in this life--trusting that in the end his salvation will pay off.

The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness is about teaching christian patience. It is the wisdom of delayed gratification. It is important to remember that the christian, when he is expected to deny himself and take up his cross, to turn the other cheek and go the extra mile, these things are not for nothing. **They are a working and a waiting for salvation. Jesus does not suffer forever, and neither do we.** We are only in this world for a little while, and in this world temptations are sure to come. And you will not be able to face them without faith in God’s word. But with the hope of eternal life, you are equipped to face all miseries, sicknesses and trials...rejoicing in the glory that is to come. But it only comes to those who trust in the Lord.

Immediately after he is baptized, and receives the Holy Spirit, Jesus is driven out into the wilderness to be tempted for forty days and forty nights. And he fasted, so that his hunger was great and his temptation to receive food was great. And his hunger is not a sin. Some desires are sinful, but Jesus’ desire to eat immediately is not a sin. It’s that either God has commanded him not to eat. Or else Jesus chose to fast, so that he could be tempted to use his power to save himself. In either case, hunger is not evil. What is evil is disobeying God in order to get your daily bread. What is evil is refusing to wait for God to fulfill his promises.

In the wilderness, Jesus’ fasting isn’t what made him faithful. It isn’t the depths of his suffering, or the magnitude of his resolve. What made Jesus faithful was that ***he truly believed that he didn’t need to sin in order to accomplish good.***  He truly believed that sinning would, in the long run, cause great evil. Jesus is the our example of patiently waiting on the lord.

Think about the first temptation and sin of Adam and Eve. Was their sin in eating the fruit? Yes and no. Y**es, in the sense that it wasn’t until they ate that there eyes were opened, they felt naked and hid from God.**  But the real source of it all was that the serpent got Eve to believe that she needed to disobey God in order to accomplish good. That was idolatry. Idolatry, is really the only sin, because it is the cause of all sin.

There are three temptations Jesus suffers, and they all have to do with idolatry. All sin begins and ends with idolatry, with trusting in other gods. And satan continues to prowl around like a roaring lion, and continues to put each and every christian in these situations in order to force us to choose. These temptations are meant by the devil for evil, but God means them for Good. How can temptations be good? Everytime you are forced to choose between turning to God’s Word to save you or turning to the world to save you, you are given opportunity to exercise your faith; you are given opportunity to trust in God.

James writes, “**Show me your faith without works, and I will show you my faith by my works**.” You ***say*** you have faith, that’s easy enough. How do you know you really have faith if it cannot be seen? A father can say he loves his children, but if he abandons them when they need him...can he really be said to love them? Or as James also writes, “**If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?**” No good at all! And no love at all.

So too, it is easy to say you trust God if you never actually have to trust him. It’s easy to trust God when you have money, friends and heath in the world to rely on. But when these are threatened, and you have to choose between them and God’s word...that is temptation and an opportunity to trust.

Temptations are sure to come and they are evil, but God sends them in order for us to see our faith and have assurance; **or else to see our faithlessness and repent.** And that’s the gospel, that when our faithlessness is exposed, God gives us a way out. We repent and Jesus forgives and gives us his Spirit to walk in newness of life. But God is a jealous God, and he will not share his glory with idols. His law is that we trust him completely; his gospel is that he will save us completely.

Do you see, then, why purity of doctrine in the church is so important. Purity of doctrine is simply the purity of God’s Word. And so, unlike Christ in the wilderness, christians today seem to believe the devil when he says “*Your church is dying, your children are falling away from the faith, people are calling you stubborn and uncompromising.* ***Just change marriage to be not about man and woman, but about people loving each other. Just change the Lord’s supper to not be about Jesus’ body and blood, but about christian love. Just change “male and female”, to maleness and femaleness and other things in between.***  *It’s not much. These are just small things. This is the way society and history is going. If we don’t change, the church will die. Just change these little doctrines. It’s not like we’re changing teaching about Jesus’ death and resurrection. Those are big things, we’re just changing these little things.”*

To this Jesus says, “Man does not live by bread alone, but by every doctrine that comes from the mouth of God.” His word might not give you immediate gratification. Your glory will be delayed. But know it is coming if you do not give up hope, but hold fast to the word and promises of God that never fail. For God is not slow to fulfill his promises, as some count slowness. But he is patient, not wishing for anyone to perish butt that all would come to a knowledge of the truth. Doctrine is truth; more basic than bread; more certain than death; as holy as God.