

# Central Pentecostal Ministries

From the Pulpit...

# Tempted

Pastor Donald Shoots



*“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.  
And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.  
And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God,  
command that these stones be made bread.”*

Matthew 4:1-3

Often the devil will assail people with a vibrant, demonic tenacity while saying to them, as he takes a swipe of death, “you were tempted; therefore you sinned.” Some sadly never overcome this lie. This is a trick of the enemy and a lie from satan himself. Just because you are tempted does not mean you have sinned.

Hebrew 4:15 says, *“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.”*

‘Tempted’ in the Greek means, ‘to test’, ‘to scrutinize’, ‘to entice’ and it also means ‘to pierce through’. Now this example before us is Jesus Christ. God the Father saw the necessity to allow Jesus to be tempted. For those of you who may have a sub-thought somewhere saying that one might escape this test of being tempted, I must tell you that no man escapes being tempted. God saw the necessity for His Son, the Spotless Lamb to be tempted, and if Jesus Christ needed

to be tested, you need to be tested! I want to pause here and say, this testing and tempting doesn’t have to be a bad thing. In fact, it can be one of the best things that will ever happen to you. Often times, especially in religious circles, there is an eagerness to learn. If we do in fact *learn something* (II Timothy 3:7), doesn’t it stand to reason that somewhere there has to be a test?

**THERE IS NEVER TEACHING**

**WITHOUT TESTING.**

Why is being tempted a good thing? While you are being tempted, you have a unique opportunity to **silence the mouth of the devil!** There is no greener field; there is no greater platform that is held, than when a believer is facing satan, being tempted. Here the believer can say beyond a shadow of a doubt, “Greater is He that is within me, than he that is in the world!” You walk away from that stronger than when you went into it.

*“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness.”* We must know this truth! On the one hand we claim to be led of the Spirit, and on the other hand, we say, ‘things just happen.’ This belief and thought can invite much confusion. It is almost as if we are of a divided mind or double-minded. One day we are close to God and the next day we don’t know where He is. This matter of being tempted needs to be settled in every believer, and it can be settled with the reality and assurance that **the Spirit of God has something to do with it!** When God is in it, you can rest in Him! The Spirit led Jesus to be tempted. We blame much on the devil, but God set this meeting up! God wants you to be a Soldier of the Cross and walk in assurance and authority! God wants to teach you, then give you a test so that you can pass it and tell the devil he is a liar! We cannot read these verses without knowing the necessity of temptation, whether we understand all of its intentions or not. The attributes of a Christian will be tested. Being tempted can be one of the most crucial times of needed growth. We know we have to take tests before we can graduate. We can take that to the other side and say, if you are not being tempted you are not growing. Learning equals testing. Hands-on experience with a real encounter is a necessity for greater knowledge and understanding. So being tempted is a beautiful thing! It means we can graduate! People say all the time, “I want to grow in the Lord.” Well, get ready for a test, for here you will really know what and who you are. We will never advance until the Father, Son, and the precious Holy Ghost and the powers of darkness know that you’ve got what you say you’ve got! **You can’t grow without being tested and tempted because the rest of your walk depends on it.**

Temptation is very real. It comes in all shapes and sizes. Sometimes it will come as an angel of light, other times it may come as a legion of demons. Sometimes it comes from Judas and other times from Alexander the Coppersmith. Yes, temptation can be glorious and beautiful, but it is a very, very real encounter. One reason it comes to the believer is that you will have another point of ministry. Afterward, when you see a young convert or young Christian that feels they are the only one satan is pressing against, the only one being tempted, you can now come along with the answer about being tempted. I have been tempted, and I expect to be tempted again, because I am not through growing! It is not odd, it’s not strange, and it can be a wonderful time in a greater spiritual sense. Don’t worry about it, “stay with God!” If you are in a battle now, do not be mistaken and look only at the physical parts. The Bible teaches us that we battle not against flesh and blood. There is always darkness laying somewhere. It is a great thing when you are tempted, and you come out victorious. You then have another great personal testimony and it is very personal. The devil told you a thousand times, ‘you won’t win.’ He said a thousand times, ‘you are defeated,’ ‘this one is too big for you.’ The powers of darkness come with a pressing attack, and the tempting is hard. The picture he presents to you will have a certain appeal. It is not fun nor funny, but to gain a victory over satan is always uplifting, encouraging and glorious! When you walk out of that valley, you can lift your hands and praise the Lord. People may look at you a little funny, but they don’t know that you’ve just come out from being assaulted by the tempter himself. *‘Now, Jesus, my Lord, and my Savior has given me a victory!’* Thank God, we can walk in His victory! Here a victory of victories can be had!



God is not looking for men big on the outside, but those big on the inside! Goliath was mesmerized by David because he didn’t look like he could beat Goliath. Goliath stares at this little boy thinking, ‘he is out here to fight *me!*?’ Almighty God is looking down from heaven saying, ‘Devil, you are about to get another shocker. **That little boy has got Me inside of him,** and there is about to be a victory for him because the battle is mine!’ The battle is the Lord’s!

The devil works to belittle your relationship with your Savior. Any acts or words he can send your way to

weaken your posture as a child of God will come. David wasn't just standing there as an earthen vessel, but inside was a treasure that was divine, and because of that treasure God took a feeble boy and made him a victor! God can take weak men and make them overcomers!



We look at temptation (especially young converts) and attempt to make some vice the ultimate source of temptation. I can tell you today that temptation is a lot bigger than that. Satan was not trying to tempt Jesus Christ to drink a beer. I do not belittle that vice, yes, he does tempt men to go back into sin. However, the devil is smart; he is trying to get you out of the Will of God!

## TEMPTATION IS NOT JUST TO MAKE MEN GO BACK TO SIN, BUT TO GET MEN OUT OF THE WILL OF GOD!

Being tempted is what the Bible says it is, we must know that temptation comes at a very calculated time. The temptation I am talking about is not governed by men or cultures. It is a divinely orchestrated time in your life. **Temptation is calculated by both God and satan.** When the Spirit led Christ up, *then* the devil came. We are not talking about a little trying of our faith; we are talking about temptation. God the Father said, 'Jesus, I need you to be by yourself.' There is a strength in numbers, knowing you have a brother or sister who will pray for you and love you beyond yourself. However, when temptation comes, it will normally be at a time when you are all alone. You see, this test has to be a pure test. You can't cheat. When things are happening in your life that are a little odd and strange, pay attention, it may be God pulling you away from everything and everybody so that you can be alone for test time. If we are able to go to someone else for the answer, bringing in the opinions and strength of others, then even if you *did* pass, you didn't pass. So the orchestration was that

Jesus would be alone. Not only did the Spirit lead Jesus to be alone, but He led Him into the wilderness. We like props, and it's amazing what we lean on. You must lean only upon the Lord at this hour! You can't lean on your money, lovely house or church. This will be a time you must only lean upon God and what you know of Him. The Father also made sure that Jesus wasn't on cloud nine. You will probably never be tempted when you are on top.

When everything is going your way, that is one thing, but get a little hungry, and something starts screaming inside of your vessel; a hunger pain shoots across your stomach, and a state of discomfort presses. God then says, 'He's ready.' Why is this? Because it has to be God's strength, it cannot be yours. I overcame that because I exercise everyday, eat all the right foods and I know how to take care of myself. He waited until Christ was hungry! He will wait until everything isn't right in your world!

I never liked 'pop quizzes' growing up. I felt like they always came when I wasn't ready. We would always ask the teacher, 'Why are you giving this test today?' She would reply, 'that's why it's called a 'pop quiz.' Don't make the mistake of thinking it will be a perfect sunny day. No, you will be alone, it will probably be in the wilderness, and you may be having a few physical problems, maybe even hungry!

A preacher was taking his first airplane ride. The plane is on the runway taking off, and he tells the stewardess, "Ma'am, this is great!" As he takes off, he sees the telephone poles go by faster and faster. He watches with amazement as the scenery around him speeds by. They then get up to 20,000 feet, where he sees nothing. No light poles, no green scenery and he tells the stewardess, "I don't like this at all. It looks like we are going to fall out of the sky. I don't know where we are and I can't see where we are going." It was then he heard the voice of God speak to him saying, "**When you can no longer judge your progress by natural means, you think you are doing nothing and going nowhere.**" If God is tempting you, there is a reason! He is trying to move you on up the road so that you can become what He desires you to be! Another point to observe is this: if God allows you to be tempted, you must be of some value to Him. Are you of such value to Christ that satan

would bother tempting YOU? If you can say, "Yes", you ought to say, 'Hallelujah! Thank you, Jesus!'

ARE YOU OF SUCH VALUE TO  
CHRIST THAT SATAN WOULD  
BOTHER TEMPTING YOU?

This temptation happened *before* angels came. While you are in the hottest time of your life, being tempted, get excited about the day when you come out. You won't be there forever! Satan is throwing the book at you; he is pulling out every stop to tempt you. Yes, he would like you to go into sin again, but his endgame is to get you out of the Will of God. Rather, in this lonely place, focus on victory and your new growth!

Matthew 4:11 tells us, "*Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.*" When satan presents you with all the flashing lights, you yet can know "It is written" and it works! When this is over, there is coming a touch from God that you have never had before. When this is over there is going to be healing, and you will be somebody that you were not before you were tempted, and you will know something you didn't know before. You will KNOW what you really have in God.

Satan wants you to get the sensation that you don't know where you are and you don't know what to do. He wants to unsettle your life. He moves in promoting confusion and fear. He whispers lies, 'You have been serving God a lot of years, what is this really about? God is not with you.' All the while God is saying, 'It is time for a promotion, and I can't promote you without a test.'



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## *Worshipping God in the Spirit of Pentecost*

The purpose of this publication is to benefit those truly seeking to follow Jesus Christ. If you or someone you know would be encouraged and strengthened by receiving these Full-Gospel messages, please contact us at:

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