

Sinlessness of Jesus

Doug Pettit

99 Essentials

From The 99 Essential Doctrines

While the Bible affirms the full humanity of Jesus, it also affirms that Jesus was completely sinless throughout His earthly life (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:22).

Nevertheless, because Jesus was fully human, He experienced real temptation of sin, as seen during His trials in the wilderness (Matt. 4). Yet even though His trials and temptations were real and similar to the rest of humanity's, Hebrews 4:15 confirms that Jesus did not sin.

From The Bible

2 Corinthians 5:21 NKJV

²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Romans 6:23 NKJV

²³ For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 5:12 NKJV

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

1 Peter 3:18 NKJV

¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,

Hebrews 7:26 NKJV

²⁶ For such a High Priest was fitting for us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens;

1 Peter 2:22 NKJV

²² “*Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth*”;

Hebrews 4:15 NKJV

¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin.

Matthew 4:1–11 NKJV

¹ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

² And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.

³ Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.”

⁴ But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*’ ”

⁵ Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple,

⁶ and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: *‘He shall give His angels charge over you,’* and, *‘In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.’*”

⁷ Jesus said to him, “It is written again, *‘You shall not tempt the Lord your God.’*”

⁸ Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

⁹ And he said to Him, “All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.”

¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, *‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.’*”

¹¹ Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

Key Thoughts

- The importance of Jesus’ sinlessness is hard to overstate:

had He sinned, the only sin He could have died for was his own. In order to be our substitute, He could not have any sins of His own.

- The record of Jesus' temptation, at least in Matthew 4, centers around 3 common areas of life:

1. Provision
2. Protection
3. Promotion

These temptations roughly parallel the temptation of Eve in Genesis 3 and John's warning in 1 John 2:16-17. It is in these three areas of life that we face—and fall to—a vast majority of our temptations. It is certain that Jesus faced other temptations in His life, but these three illustrate for us how superior He is to us.

- The tactic Jesus employed to overcome temptation is something we can, and should, freely copy: use Scripture. Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 8:3, Deuteronomy 6:16, and Deuteronomy 6:13-14. It is worth noting that Satan knows Scripture as well, quoting Psalm 91:11-12. We need to be aware that not everyone who quotes Scripture has good intentions or good interpretations.

Additional Thought

The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. God does not tempt us. He does, however, allow us to be tempted.

James 1:13 NKJV

¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by

God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.

1 Corinthians 10:13 NKJV

¹³ No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*.