

ask ANYTHING

Did the devil make me do it?

Matthew 4:1-11 (ESV)

¹Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ²And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³And the 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,

“Man shall 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 set him on the pinnacle of the temple ⁶and said 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, lest you strike your foot against a stone.”

⁷Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall 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 glory. ⁹And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” ¹⁰Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

“You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.”

¹¹Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

INTRODUCTION

“It’s all right letting yourself go, as long as you can get yourself back.” —Mick Jagger

1. Did the devil make me do it?

What is sin?

Matthew 4:1

Who is Satan?

He lies (John 8:44). He works behind the scenes (1 John 3:8). He contends (fights) with God’s angels (Jude 1: 9).

He prowls (1 Peter 5:8). He schemes to outwit believers (2 Corinthians 2:11). He blinds unbelievers

(2 Corinthians 4:4). He deceives (Revelation 20:2-3). He tempts (1 Corinthians 7:5). He confuses (Genesis 3:1).

Satan does encourage God’s people to sin through all these different means.

“The Spirit of God, who lives in believers, is stronger than the devil.” 1 John 4:4

“Believers are no longer citizens of the domain of darkness but are citizens of Jesus’ kingdom.” Corinthians 6:15-16

What is our sinful nature?

“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once **lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind**, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.” Ephesians 2:1-3

THE ANSWER:

Demons can tempt, influence, and attack God’s people, but do not control or “possess” Christians.

2. How do we fight sin?

TEMPTATION #1: Fleshly Desire (Matthew 4:2-4)

TEMPTATION #2: Power (Matthew 4:5-7)

TEMPTATION #3: Wealth (Matthew 4:8-10)

This is how you can resist temptation like Jesus:

1. **PREPARE** - by committing portions of scripture to memory
2. **MEDITATE** - on the verses each day to renew your mind (Rom 12:1-2)
3. **QUOTE** - the verse out loud when tempted
4. **REPEAT**

“Hold the promise and the pleasure of Christ firmly in your mind until it pushes the other images out. Fix your eyes on Jesus (Hebrews 12:2). Many fail because they give in too soon. They say, “I tried to push it out, and it didn’t work.” I ask, “How long did you try? How hard did you exert your mind?” The mind is a muscle. You can flex it and strengthen it. Be brutal. Hold the promise of Christ before your eyes. Hold it. Hold it! Don’t let it go! Keep holding it! How long? As long as it takes. Fight! For Christ’s sake, fight till you win!” —John Piper

“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with temptation, he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.” —1 Corinthians 10:13

3. How do we practically change impure thoughts?

REALIZATION #1: Take the impure thought captive

REALIZATION #2: Remove the things that are defeating you

REALIZATION #3: Tell someone you trust

REALIZATION #4: You are not alone

REALIZATION #5: You need tools

REALIZATION #6: You need a changed heart

How does God change our heart desires?

“The Christian who has stopped repenting has stopped growing.” —A.W. Pink