



Jesus, Single Like Me: He Dwelt with Temptation
by Kris Swiatocho

Jesus lived his life as a single adult till his death. Because he lived his life as a single adult, he understands every aspect of what you and I are experiencing today. This series examines the "singleness" of Christ in relation to our singleness with the hope you will be encouraged to walk this journey you have been given. A journey that not only leads to the cross for our salvation but to his resurrection for our future.

How many times a day are you tempted? Just this morning as my alarm went off I was tempted to sleep just a bit more. I kept telling myself that five more minutes wouldn't hurt. When I finally got up, I thought, Maybe I need two cups of coffee versus one this time. Again, another temptation for what I don't need.

The phone rang and, of course, I was easily distracted by a long conversation, knowing I had a lot of work to do today. Then came time to eat my wheat bran cereal. I really wanted a big plate of bacon and eggs with syrup. Hmmm. But I know it isn't good for me. As the day progressed I made choice after choice, resisting multiple temptations to choose poorly. I wish I could say I was tempted with good things. I never hear anyone say they were tempted to eat a big salad with no dressing" or they were tempted to go walking versus sitting on the couch or they were tempted to tithe twice the amount this much.

So what is temptation? Webster's says it the acting of tempting or the state of being tempted especially to evil. Also, a cause or occasion of enticement. Synonyms are allurements, enticement, and seduction. Wow, depending on how you look at it, it can be something really bad or something really good.

Temptation: When It's Bad

We all experience temptation daily. Sometimes the temptation is to eat something we don't need or to say something about someone that isn't truthful or to put off cleaning our homes, etc. And sometimes the temptation is far worse, such as doing drugs, having sex outside of marriage, stealing, looking at porn, etc.

God's Word is full of scripture talking about temptation. From the beginning Adam and Eve were tempted to eat the fruit that God told them not to eat. They fell into temptation because this fruit was advertised as something more than just food. They were tempted with something they wanted or felt they needed beyond God. Something that could give them perceived power. Temptation isn't always just about that minute of control or satisfaction. The enemy uses anything he can to tempt us into changing our lives to serve him versus God.

People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction (1 Timothy 6:9).

The fact that we are tempted is in itself not a sin. Temptation is a part of our lives. It's, of course, what we do when we are tempted. It's having a plan and being ready to deal with it. Jesus knew about temptation. And because he was fully human and single, too, he dwelt with all kinds of temptation.

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away from



me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him (Matthew 4:1-11).

Here's Jesus, a single man, being tempted to have things that perhaps you only thought you could have when you are old, married or financially successful. Jesus was hungry and the enemy enticed him with food. As a single adult, what are you hungry for? Are you craving friends, a spouse, a better job, a better place to live, and/or solutions to your problems? The enemy also tempted Jesus to throw his life away for surely as the Son of God, angels would protect him from death. Jesus knew what it felt like to be tempted, to be encouraged to throw his life away. As a single, do you sometime think you are all alone? That nothing matters? That you should either give up God or give up life? Do you realize when the devil is tempting you it is because the devil is scared? The devil knows the power that lives in you as a believer. He knows the power that can be used to stop him.

Again, the enemy tried to tempt Jesus with possessions and power by showing him all he could have if he bowed down to him. Personally, I have often desired more than what I have. I have wanted to be married, have a bigger home, travel to wonderful places, have servants, have a pedicure each week, etc. Remember, Jesus had nothing. I am sure he was tempted all the time with bigger and better things. Wouldn't you have preferred a variety of food versus fish and bread every day? Maybe a nice soft bed versus the cold, dirty ground? Air conditioning? Someone to wait on you? Someone to drive you from city to city versus having to walk? Jesus knows the enemy. He knows what he tempts us with day after day. He knows the enemy watches us and is preparing an attack.

Hmmm, maybe I will wait 'til Kris is sad about something and I will tempt her with comfort food ... that always makes her happy, even if it's temporary. Or maybe I will wait till she is tired ... she will not want to exercise. I will tempt her and say she needs a break today cause she deserves it. The heavier she gets the closer to death she gets AND the less time she is on this earth to witness, the better. Or maybe I will wait 'til she is discouraged and feels like quitting to whisper in her ear that no one cares and they never will. The more I can get her focused only on herself, the less she is focused on others and I win. Yes, that is what I will do to her today.

So the enemy knows our weaknesses, our fears and our struggles. He wants us defeated because he knows the power that is within us. So if this is true, then can temptation, meant by the enemy to destroy, actually build us up in Christ? Can it make us stronger? Yes!

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us ... (Ephesians 3:20).

Temptation: When It's Good (Being Tested)

So can temptation be a good thing? Yes. Often when I am tempted, I wonder sometimes is it temptation by the enemy or testing by God. God himself does not tempt us, but he does test us.

When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone ... (James 1:13).

Sometimes, just like with Jesus, temptation can be a good thing. It can draw us closer to God. With Jesus, the fact that he was able to quote back scripture (the truth) to put the devil in his place was a good thing.

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance (James 1:2).



Also, to be able to experience making the right choices when tempted is a good thing. We can remind the devil (and even others) of why we are on this earth and what God is doing in our lives (of course you need to know why you are on this earth). That what the devil meant for harm, God can turn for good. The more we are tempted and make the right choices, the more we are giving the glory to God in those choices. We have shown that we are growing. Of course, if we do fail (fall into temptation) and sin, we still have to deal with the consequences. We must quickly ask forgiveness and turn from the sin. We need to make every effort to learn from those consequences.

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Action Steps :

PRAY: That you will not fall into temptation. You know yourself and you know the areas in which you struggle. Pray and ask God for his help.

"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak" (Matthew 26:41).

BE IN GOD'S WORD: Simple and easy solution to temptation: be in God's Word more to help battle what's coming—not only to know the truth but also to speak it back to the enemy. Use God's Word to bind the enemy for he does not have any power except what you give him.

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God'" (Matthew 4:4).

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand (Ephesians 6:12-13).

FLEE: When we are tempted, the Word says to flee. Don't mess with it. I mean, if you struggle with donuts, run. Just run!

Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart (2 Timothy 2:22).

PLAN AHEAD: If you know you struggle with certain things, plan ahead to avoid the temptation altogether. If you struggle with sexual thoughts, what are you watching on TV that could be tempting you? Maybe its time to stop watching TV or movies. Personally, I don't own a TV—not because TV is bad, but I had a hard time with watching too much of it. Also, a lot of it is very sexual or has bad language, violence, etc. If you know you struggle with buying things you don't need at the store, pray about everything you put in your buggy to see if God says you can have it. I have been known to put everything back that was in my cart. Have a group of friends who hold you accountable.

Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted (Galatians 6:1).

TAKE TIME: If you are not able to flee, take the time to ask God to help you make the right choice. I know we can't always flee a big buffet dinner or something the boss wants us to watch or being caught in the middle of a bad joke, etc., but we do have a choice on how we react to it.



And remember, HE WILL BE BACK, SO BE READY. The enemy will continue to find ways to tempt you. That is who he is, so be ready.

When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time (Luke 4:13).

Because Jesus was single like me, he was tempted. He suffered just like we do. He knows what we are going through, and he encourages us each day to stay the course, choosing what is best versus what is now—to learn from our mistakes and to help others in their journey.

For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted (Hebrews 2:17-18).

Questions for Discussion or Personal Exploration:

1. Think about your day today and all the choices you had to make. Were you tempted in any of those circumstances to choose poorly?
2. What are some areas of temptation you struggle in?
3. How have you dwelt with temptation in the past?
4. Where has God brought you in areas of temptation?
5. Re-read 1 Corinthians 10:13. How have you lived this out?
6. How can you help others in their walk with resisting temptation?

Application:

Start today to pray and ask to reveal his truth to you. What is God telling you about yourself in regards to temptation? Are there areas of temptation that you continue to fall into that you need to surrender to God? Do you need to seek counseling and a support group to help you stay accountable? What is your next step?

Kris Swiatocho is the President and Director of TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries and FromHisHands.com Ministries. Kris has served in ministry in various capacities for the last 20 years. An accomplished trainer and mentor, Kris has a heart to reach and grow leaders so they will in turn reach and grow others. She is currently working on her third Bible study, *From the Manger to the Cross: The Men in Jesus' Life*. Her second Bible study, *From the Manger to the Cross: The Women in Jesus' Life*, was published last fall and is available on her websites. Her first book, *Singles and Relationships: A 31-Day Experiment*, was co-authored with Dick Purnell of Single Life Resources.

TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries helps churches, pastors and single adult leaders evaluate, develop and support their single adult ministries through high-energy speaking engagements, results-oriented consulting and training and leadership development conferences and seminars. Click here to request a FREE "How to Start a Single Adult Ministry" guide.

FromHisHands.com Ministries is Kris's speaking ministry. If you've ever heard her speak, you know that Kris is the kind of speaker who keeps the crowd captivated, shares great information and motivates people to make a difference in the lives of those around them! She speaks to all church audiences on everything from "first impression" ministry to women's topics to singles and young adults. She can speak on a Sunday morning, at a woman's retreat or for a single adults conference. Bring Kris to your church today!

Singles and Relationships by Kris Swiatocho and Dick Purnell

Many singles are Christians who wonder if God will ever bring a mate their way or if they should just stop focusing on a future with a marriage partner and live the single life to the fullest. Kris Swiatocho and Dick Purnell offer solid biblical answers for singles in this newest title in Dick's popular 31-Day Experiment Bible study.

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