

Sermon Discussion Guide
Sunday, November 22, 2020
Some Very Bad Choices Are Pleasing to the Eyes
Matthew 4: 8-11

Sunday's sermon was the last in a four-part series on the temptation of Jesus. We have been considering how the three temptations correspond to the three vulnerabilities mentioned in I John 1:16 (NASB), "the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the boastful pride of life." Satan's final attempt to cause Jesus to respond sinfully was aimed at Jesus' vision, meaning his physical sight but also his perception. Satan was trying to entrap Jesus by stirring up "the lust of the eyes" in him.

We have many natural appetites that aren't necessarily sinful. For example, we have an appetite for food that is meant to motivate us to take in the nutrition that our bodies require. But that natural desire can lead to a lust that sees food as more than something we need to live. A desire becomes a lust when it goes beyond an appropriate boundary or limit. That desire is empowered by something we perceive we will get from eating, such as emotional or physical comfort. That belief can lead us toward addiction and the health issues related to obesity. The point is, because of what you believe you will get from consuming food, your physical eyes and the perceptions of your heart can cause you to experience temptation in the area of eating. The same is true for all of our natural desires including our sex drive, our need for material things, and even our need for social connection.

1. Satan showed Jesus the kingdoms of the world and their splendor (doxa: glory). How might those things generate lust in someone?
2. One of the glories used to tempt Jesus may have been the adoration and worship of people. Why would it not be appropriate for Jesus to receive worship?
3. Jesus would indeed eventually receive worship from people in a worthy manner but the pathway to that reality was much different than the pathway Satan suggested. What pathway did the Father want Jesus to take?
4. Satan wanted Jesus to worship him. How is worship related to what we perceive we will get from things we lust for?
5. In what ways is "the lust of the eyes" potentially an avenue to temptation and sin, when we are on-line on our computers and other devices?
6. How does the lust of the eyes relate to our need for material things? Are you ever challenged by this? In what way? How do we keep our needs and desires in proper perspective?
7. I went to an ornate mall one time and felt like I was in a temple where I was being invited to worship. How does marketing appeal to the lust of the eyes? What unspoken promises are being made to us? Are those promises ever fulfilled?
8. Why do you think some people have all the stuff that money can buy and yet they are empty and unfulfilled?
9. How is the lust of the eyes related to our need for social connection? Do you ever think Satan tempts us with the glory of this world, perhaps a desire to receive glory? How is that related to worship? Considering that Satan tried to get Jesus to worship him, do you think that appropriate worship of God might be a weapon we can use in this battle. Consider what Jesus said in response to Satan's temptation.