

**Power Over Temptation**  
**Overcoming the Boastful Pride of Life**  
**Matthew 4:5-7**  
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Just to remind you where we are, we have begun a study of the gospel of Mark. But we didn't get very far; we got to the temptation of Christ, and I've made a decision that, it has been a great benefit to me and I hope it has been to you, and that is to take the temptations of Christ, the three temptations that are recorded in Matthew's and Luke's gospel but not in Mark's, and take our time to sort of walk through each of those temptations. We've done the first of them and tonight we come to the second temptation of Christ.

In a recent business magazine, there was an article entitled "The Executive's Guide to Self-Promotion." Some of you may have read it. The reporter defines "self-promotion" as "the act of gaining the interest and attention of others, and over time earning their respect and trust." She had a number of helpful tips for self-promotion. Here are a couple of them. She said, "Volunteer for visible assignments at work." That will get you noticed. That will promote yourself. She said, "And make sure you show your progress to others." Achieving or exceeding goals is great, but you've got to communicate your successes and ensure that others notice your accomplishments. A third piece of advice that this author had was, "Be assertive. Voice ideas and opinions in a way to attract positive attention to yourself." The person who posted this summary of the article online finished comments with these words: "Sometimes I forget to promote something I've done, assuming it won't go unnoticed. But in truth, the only way that that would happen is if I share its success. You are your best advocate."

That is symptomatic of the times in which we live. If you're going to get promoted, you're going to have to promote yourself. Be in to advancing and promoting yourself. The truth is, we don't need any tips on self-promotion. It's part of the fallen human condition, and it's a constant source of temptation for us as Christians. And during His earthly life, our Lord was tempted to pursue His own personal glory, separate from the glory of God. And tonight, we'll see how He responded, and learn how we too ought to respond when the temptation to self-promotion and the

pursuit of personal glory comes our way. Just to remind you, a couple of brief things from our last study to bring you up to speed, you remember we looked in detail—and if you weren't here I encourage you to listen online to catch up, because we did cover a lot of things that I won't cover tonight—but one summary slide, the progression of temptation, we said all sins spring from temptation: we sin because we're tempted. All temptations—for us, now we're talking about, not Christ's—all temptations spring from sinful cravings in our heart. James puts it this way in James 1:14: "Each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust." And the word "lust" simply means "to crave something"—to want something badly. It's not primarily a sexual word. It's a word that means to crave what you do not have. That's the source of temptations. It comes from within. For us, the ultimate source of all temptation to sin comes from the cravings that are in our flesh, the Bible calls it, our unredeemed humanness. So out of that part of us that's unredeemed flow these cravings, and our temptations come from those cravings, wanting to be satisfied. And our sins ultimately result from that as well.

Thirdly, all sinful cravings ultimately spring from three root sinful cravings. So, if you were to catalog for me all of those things that you end up craving that are sort of a recurrent theme in your life, things you want more than you want God, ultimately I could draw a line between all of those, back to these three root cravings. They are the lust of the flesh; the lust of the eye; and the boastful pride of life. Those are found in 1 John 2, and we looked at that. In 1 John 2, verse 15 and 16, John says these things comprise all that is in the world. All that's in the world system, opposed to God. In some way, these three are comprehensive and all-inclusive. They are the root sinful cravings.

And the fourth sort of progression of temptation is those three root temptations spring from ultimately three normal, God-given human desires. It's at this fourth level that Jesus was tempted. He did not have within Himself sinful cravings that cried out to be satisfied. Instead, He had normal God-given desires, just as we do, and that's where the source of temptation came. As we saw with the first temptation—the temptation to turn the stones into bread—it was a temptation to satisfy the normal God-given appetite for food in a way that was contrary to the will of God. So, it was out of the natural desires, the normal, non-sinful, human desires that the devil used in Christ to bring temptation His way. The difference is, for us—this is where it's different—for us, our fallenness seizes on these three God-given desires and perverts them, and

warps them, and turns them into the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the boastful pride of life. Every temptation, every kind of temptation that we face, ultimately springs from one of these three root temptations. And that's why it's interesting that Jesus's temptations parallel these three. For Him it was not the craving of the flesh, the craving of the eye, and the boastful pride of life. For Him it was the natural God-given desires that lie below that, at level four here in my little progression.

Now remember that Jesus's temptations are recorded for two reasons. It's very important you remember this. Reason number one: they are there to demonstrate Jesus's own power over temptation. That is the most important thing. He showed by head-to-head combat with the devil, that He would not give in to sin. He did what the first Adam could not do. The First Adam was in a garden with everything he needed and only one thing prohibited, and he fell. The Second Adam, as the Scripture calls Christ, was in a wilderness without food that He needed for forty days, without all of the needs of life being met, and He did not succumb in head-to-head competition with the devil. So, it's to demonstrate Jesus's own power over temptation. It's also—these temptations are recorded—to provide us with a pattern for overcoming temptation in our own lives. This is a secondary reason, but a very important one as well. Now with that review, I want us to look for just a few minutes as we prepare for the Lord's table, at Jesus's second temptation. Both Matthew and Luke record three temptations. Those temptations are the climax of the temptations: they come at the end of the forty days, and they are representative of the temptations that Jesus faced over that forty-day period. We're looking at Matthew's account, because Matthew is the one who lists these temptations in chronological order, and Luke does not. Matthew chapter 4. I invite you to turn there with me. The second temptation of Christ is recorded here in Matthew 4, and verses 5 through 7.

First of all, I want us to look at the preparation. The preparation—it's found in verse 5. It says: "Then the devil took Him into the Holy City"—clearly the reference here is to the city of Jerusalem for a couple of reasons. One, because that's the name given to Jerusalem in other places in Scripture, even in Matthew's gospel over in chapter 27, he refers to Jerusalem as the Holy City. And also, because he takes Him to the temple, and Jerusalem was the only city where the temple stood. So, he takes Him to Jerusalem and he has Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple. Now there's some discussion here about what happened. Did Jesus actually go with the

devil physically into Jerusalem, or was this like a vision? Well, remember that Jesus has been in the wilderness of Judea, near the Jordan where He was baptized, down near the Dead Sea. He's probably, for those forty days, somewhere between ten and forty miles from Jerusalem for those forty days following His baptism. And these three climactic temptations come at the very end of that forty-day period. So, did He go, or didn't He go? Well, we can't be sure. The key issue, however, is that either way, the temptation was very real to Christ. If Jesus and Satan actually went into the city—as it appears that they did, and most commentators would agree with that, but even some I respect would not—it would appear that they got there the normal way, and that is by walking. The Greek word here for “took”—the devil took Him—is the same word Matthew uses for Joseph and Mary, excuse me, Joseph taking Mary and Jesus into Egypt, and for Jesus taking the disciples with Him to the high mountain for the transfiguration. It simply means “to take with” or “to take along with.” And so, it appears if we take the text at face value, that Jesus and the devil walk into the city of Jerusalem from the wilderness where He has been. Matthew adds the devil took Him into the Holy City and had Him stand, literally the text says, “and set Him on the pinnacle of the temple.”

Now what is this pinnacle of the temple? The English word “pinnacle” comes from a Latin word which means “little wing.” And that is exactly what the Greek word means: “a little wing of the temple.” We can't be certain what this place was, but there is general agreement, and I'm going to show you the place where it most likely was. This morning, you remember that I explained how Herod built that large, artificial platform over Mount Moriah, and on that thirty-six-acre platform, or mount, he built the temple. Here is a model: this is in the city of Jerusalem; it is an archeologically correct model of the city of Jerusalem in Jesus's time. This is, we are, the viewpoint here is standing on the Mount of Olives on the east side of the city, looking out west, toward the temple. You can see here this Temple Mount is, it's like a large box. It begins here. This is the retaining wall I was describing this morning, moving all along here. This is, this whole area, is called the Temple Mount. Now you have to adjust your mind because when you look at that, it looks like a very small area. Remember, that surface, that top flat surface on which those buildings appear, is thirty-six acres. It holds hundreds of thousands of people. So, you have to keep that scale in your mind. The large building in the center is the temple proper. That is where the holy place and the holy of holies would have existed. Today, the Dome of the

Rock is there, the Muslim shrine. It would have, it is by the way, about half the size of what the temple would have been. So that gives you some idea of the scale that we're talking about. So that's from the east, looking across. Let me give you a view from the south. I gave you that, just so you can orient yourself. Now we're standing on the south side of the Temple Mount. You can still see the temple right here. We were looking at it from the east over here, before. Now we're looking from the south up, at that same Temple Mount. Here's the retaining wall and here's the temple courts—all up here, that large, flat thirty-six-acre spot. Now, on the east side of the Temple Mount was the Mount of Olives. That's where we were just looking from. This valley that runs between the Mount of Olives and the Temple Mount is called the Kidron Valley. And you see it here, pictured on the valley. That meant that the eastern wall of the Temple Mount was above the Kidron Valley. And on top of the platform on that southeastern corner of the Temple Mount, stood what was called the “royal porticos.” Those are the red top buildings that you see there. That was the corner that was typically known as the pinnacle—right where the red arrow is pointing. Now again, you have to remember the scale. It's hard to glance at this and get some idea of what the scale is. But from the top of the building there where the arrow points, down to the floor of the Kidron Valley below, is a drop of some 450 feet, or 150 yards—if you're standing where that red arrow is pointing, looking down. It was huge. Josephus the first century historian describes it like this. He says the height of the portico standing over it was so very great that if anyone looked down from its rooftop, combining the two elevations, he would become dizzy and his vision would be unable to reach the end of so measureless a depth. Imagine someone in the first century, never having been in a skyscraper, looking down a building that dropped 150 yards. That would trouble some of you today. As one of my family members said, I'm not afraid of heights; I'm afraid of falling, and that'll do it to you. Now it was from that corner, the pinnacle, that tradition says James the brother of Christ was thrown to his death. But here's the point I want you to get—it was the highest and most visible place in the ancient city of Jerusalem. Apart from the top of the temple proper itself, there was nowhere you could go and be more visible. And I'll say more about that in a moment. Matthew Henry in describing this in his old commentary says

How subtle the devil was, in the choice of the place for his temptations. Intending to solicit Christ to an ostentation, [or show] of His own power, and a vain-glorious presumption upon God's providence, he fixes Him on a public place in

Jerusalem, a populous city, and in the temple, one of the wonders of the world, continually gazed upon with admiration by somebody. There he might make himself remarkable, and be taken notice of by everybody, and prove himself the Son of God; not, as he was urged in the former temptation, in the obscurities of a wilderness, but before multitudes, upon the most eminent stage of action.

That gives you some idea of what's happening here in the preparation. That moves us to the second point in this text in verse 6, and that is the temptation itself. That was the preparation; now comes the temptation. Verse 6 says, "and 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, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'"

From that high pinnacle, 450 feet above the Kidron Valley, Satan lays out the temptation. Again, he begins with those words "If You are the Son of God." Now as we noted last time, for each of the temptations Matthew uses a conditional construction in the Greek language that assumes the condition is true. He's not saying, "Come on, I know You're not the Son of God. Prove it to me." Instead, the speaker may believe this or may not believe it—the construction doesn't tell us—but he's assuming it's true. So, we can translate Satan's words something like this: "If You are the Son of God, and I assume that's true, throw Yourself down."

Now why would Christ want to do that? Satan explains why. He quotes two verses from Psalm 91. He says, "it is written, 'GOD WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU'; and 'ON their HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'"

Now this second temptation says just how crafty Satan really is. Remember Jesus's response to the first temptation? In responding to the first temptation, He quoted Scripture. So, what does Satan do? In the second temptation he quotes Scripture to tempt Jesus to sin. Also, in Jesus's response to the first temptation He'd said I'm not going to turn these stones into bread because, and He quotes from Deuteronomy, He says because I trust God. He will take care of Me. And so Satan springs from that; not only does he use the Bible, but he plays on Jesus's trust in God.

He says okay, so you trust God. Well, here's an opportunity to prove it. Satan is saying that if Jesus is the real Messiah, then the smallest injury is not possible. The angels won't even let Him stub the toes that are exposed by His sandals. What I want you to see here—this is really amazing, if you think about it—the devil used Scripture to tempt the Son of God! He misinterpreted, he misapplied it, but if he did that with Christ, guess what? He'll do the same thing with you, and with me. Again, Matthew Henry says: “Is Satan so well versed in Scripture as to be able to quote it so readily? It seems he is. Note it is possible for a man to have his head full of Scripture, and his mouth full of Scripture, while his heart is full of enmity to God and all goodness.”

When I was working, when I was in seminary, college and seminary, I told you before I would go out and, on Saturday nights and preach in the prisons—a prison nearby. And I'll never get over the fact that there was a man there in prison for murdering his mother-in-law. He wanted to kill his wife, but he couldn't find her, so—she was gone, so—he just took the first one he came to, killed his mother-in-law. He was in prison for that for life, and he knew more Bible than most Christians I've ever met.

The devil does too. This remains one of Satan's most effective tools. He uses Scripture; he convinces people to use the Scripture to their own advantage. On many occasions I have heard hurting spouses in difficult marriages twist and distort the passages that speak of legitimate biblical grounds for divorce when they don't have them. They distort and twist them all in an effort to justify their unbiblical decisions.

Recently, my wife and I were visiting with some family and, in one of the churches that we knew about in that area, there was someone who had been disciplined out of the church for disciplinable offenses—church discipline. And they distributed in the church they had been disciplined out of, a little card that had their names on it and had the verse that says “My conscience is clear. There is nothing between me and God.” Using Scripture to justify the sin that they had been disciplined out of the church for.

So what is this temptation all about? Satan uses the Scripture, but what exactly is he tempting Jesus to do? Listen carefully. This temptation is not about finding a high place and urging Jesus

to jump, to see if God would rescue Him. There are some commentators I've read who say, "You know that natural urge that we all have when we stand in a high place, we think 'I wonder what it'd be like to jump,' that's what Jesus was experiencing." That's ridiculous. Okay, that's not at all what's going on here. During our trip to Israel, we stopped in a desolate spot in the Judean wilderness where Jesus's temptations occurred—where He was fasting for forty days and tempted. This is what it looks like. You see those little green specks down there in the wadi in the dry riverbed? Those are huge trees. That gives you some scale of how large these mountains were, and there were precipices and cliffs throughout that area where Jesus was tempted. There were dozens of places that were high places. If Satan didn't take Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple in Jerusalem because he was looking for a high place—which he wasn't, because there were plenty here—then there must be more involved. If you could have seen the pinnacle of the temple in ancient times, you would have seen that it was one of the most visible places in the entire city. I've shown you this slide. But I want to point out something else here. It would have been visible to a large portion of the city. This was one of the most important areas of the city in Jesus's time—the City of David, as it was called—but more importantly, the main entrance to the Temple Mount, by hundreds of thousands of people, and Jerusalem at the time was probably inhabited by eighty to a hundred thousand people. They would have come, many of them on a daily basis, for the times prayer, you remember, as you read about even in the book of Acts. Those people would have come up these steps. This is called the "southern steps." This is the main entrance—these double sets of doors here with the main entrance up on to the Temple Mount. And so, at the right time and it appears that Satan is doing all of this for the right timing. The right time, there would be tens of thousands of people ascending those steps, going up for the time of prayer, and the morning or evening sacrifice. It was an incredibly public place.

So, this temptation is not merely about throwing oneself off a high place and being rescued by the angels. The heart of this temptation, listen carefully, is about *being seen*. Why? Well, there was a rabbinic tradition that read, when the King, Messiah, reveals Himself, then He comes and stands on the roof of the holy place. That may have been involved. But more than that, for Jesus to ascend to the top of the pinnacle of the temple, and to jump and be rescued, would prove in the minds of the Jewish people that He was what? In fact, the Messiah. In his commentary on this passage, John MacArthur writes: "For Jesus to have followed Satan's suggestion would have



been in the eyes of many Jews sure proof of His Messiahship.” That’s the temptation. It’s “Jump from here, and in so doing prove to all of these people who will see that You are in fact the Messiah. Isn’t that what You want?”

Alfred Edersheim, the great historian, writes: “Now then let Him descend, Heaven-borne, into the midst of priests and people. What shouts of acclamation would greet His appearance! What homage of worship would be His! The goal can at once be reached, and that at the head of believing Israel...The goal might indeed have been reached; but not the Divine goal, nor in God's way.”

You see, what Satan was urging Christ to do was just the kind of sign that many were hoping for and expecting from the Messiah. It was the kind of sign many false messiahs were trying to perform, even in the first century. Jesus said, “An adulterous evil generation craves a sign.” And He warns in Matthew 24: “False Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.” This is what Satan wants Jesus to do. To create this great opportunity for a sign where He can show that He is in fact the Messiah. William Barkley in his commentary sites several examples from around the time of Christ, of people doing just this or trying to. A man named Theudas led a group of people from the temple to the Jordan River, promising to split the waters. Of course, you know what happened. After he got there and didn’t split the waters, no one listened to him anymore. This is what always happens with these guys. An Egyptian of that first century promised that he would flatten the walls of Jerusalem. Of course, that too never happened. Tradition says that Simon the magician from Acts 8 actually attempted to do the very thing Satan tempted Jesus to do. He jumped off of the pinnacle of the temple, and Barclay says he lost both his life, and of course, his following. So, what’s going on here? When you look at the temptation, the nature of the second temptation, to back up and address what we talked about before, this was in Satan’s attempt, an appeal to the God-given desire in Christ to bring glory to God, but the temptation to do it in such a way that God had not chosen. God *would* show that He was the Messiah, but not with a trick—not with a sign or wonder like this. Instead, what had the Spirit done? Remember after Jesus’s baptism? The Spirit, rather than leading Him into the temple, leading Him into Jerusalem, having Him show Himself and do some great sign or wonder for the priest, to prove to the leadership that He was the Messiah, the Spirit had driven Him into the wilderness alone to be tempted. And so that

was exactly the best way that Christ could bring glory to God at this time in His life and ministry. So, the temptation then was in reality an appeal to self-promotion masquerading as a desire to bring glory to God.

In the garden of Eden, Satan used this very same temptation. You remember when Eve saw that the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, she saw that it was desirable for three reasons, do you remember? It was good for food, it was a delight to the eyes, and it was desirable to make you wise—or, as Satan put it to Eve, God knows the day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

Now how does all of this relate to us? Let me put it very simply in these steps. There is within each of us a God-given desire to bring glory to God. We were made for this purpose. But our fallen hearts take that God-given desire and naturally pervert it and warp it into a desire not for God's glory, but for our own personal glory. In 1 John 2, the apostle John calls it "the boastful pride of life." So, for us who are fallen, the root sinful desire is a craving for personal glory. That is the boastful pride of life: I want to be recognized for who I am and what I have done; I want people to worship me. But the God-given desire that lies behind this craving is the desire to bring glory to God. We were made for that, and it's at that level that our Lord was tempted. Satan said, "Here's an opportunity for You to bring glory to God, to show that You are Messiah." But it really wasn't that at all. It was a temptation to promote Himself, to bring personal glory at the expense of God's glory.

So, what was the biblical response? You see this in verse 7: "Jesus said to him, 'On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.''"

Here's how Jesus responded, how we should respond. Jesus in all three temptations responds with Scripture. Specifically, all three responses come from Deuteronomy chapter 6 to chapter 8. He quotes from the Septuagint and in this case, He quotes Deuteronomy 6:16. By quoting Scripture in response to Satan's abuse of Scripture, we have a powerful lesson. Our Lord teaches us that we have an obligation to reconcile the various teaching of Scripture with other Scripture. It's really an argument for systematic theology—for Scripture interpreting Scripture. This is an

old quote, but one that I think will benefit you. This is from Archbishop Trench, a language expert who wrote,

There lies in it [Christ's words] the secret of our safety and defense against all distorted use of isolated passages in holy scripture. Only as we enter into the unity of scripture, as it balances, completes, and explains itself, are we warned against error and delusion, excess, or defect on this side or the other. Thus the retort, [that Jesus gives] 'It is written again,' [or in other place it's written] must be of continual application; for indeed what very often are heresies but one-sided, exaggerated truths, truths rent away indeed from the body and complex of the truth, without the balance of counter-truth, which should have kept them in their due place, coordinated with other truths or subordinated to them; and so, because all such checks are wanting, [it's] not truth anymore, but [what?] error.

So, Jesus teaches us even as He responds here to Satan a crucial truth. But even more important for us is the context of Jesus's response. It's referring back, Deuteronomy 6:16 is, to Exodus. Turn back with me to Exodus. This where this incident that Deuteronomy is rehearsing came from, Exodus 17. Exodus 17. You remember the story here; the people are thirsty. [Why aren't you giving] "us water [verse 2] that we may drink?" "Why do you quarrel with me?" Moses said, "Why do you test the LORD? But the people thirsted there for water; and they grumbled against Moses and said, 'Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?'"

So Moses, as we saw this morning, his circumstances drive him to prayer. He cries out to the LORD, saying, "What shall I do to this people? A little more and they will stone me."

Then the LORD said to Moses, I'm going to provide. Take your staff and you will strike the rock, verse 6, and water will come out of it, that people may drink. Moses did that. But notice verse 7. Here's the key verse: "He named the place Massah and Meribah because of the quarrel of the sons of Israel,"—and here's the key— "and because they tested the LORD," —How? How did they test God? — "saying, 'Is the LORD among us, or not?'" Essentially, what these people were saying was this: "If the LORD is truly among us, then He will do this thing. He will give us water." That is the very thing, do you see, that Satan was tempting Christ to do. If you are

really the Son of God among us, if you're really God among us, if you're really the Messiah, then prove it to these people. It was a temptation to promote Himself in a way that was at a time of His own making and in a way of His own making. Jesus said to do so was to presume on God; it was to test God. If Jesus had given in, He would have turned from pursuing the glory of God and would have instead been pursuing His own glory without reference to God.

That was Jesus's response: "I cannot put God to the test. I will not put Him to the test." Now, in one sense Jesus's temptation was unique. We will never be tempted like He was. None of us will ever be tempted to try to prove that we're the Messiah. This evening, as we were getting ready to come to church, Sheila asked me what I was going to be teaching on tonight and I said the second temptation—you know, about being tempted to jump off the temple and prove you're the Messiah. And she kind of breathed a sigh of relief and said, "Whew! Good, you know, I've never been tempted to do that and neither have you." I said, "Oh, by the way, it's about self-promotion and seeking personal glory." And she winced. And we all do. I winced. You wince. Because this is where we live. This is what we're constantly tempted to do. This is the root temptation for us. It's the temptation of self-promotion and selfish ambition. In the words of the apostle John, it is the pursuit of the boastful pride of life. We have taken the God-given desire to pursue God's glory, and we've turned it upside down into the pursuit of our own personal glory. You say, "I don't remember doing that lately." Every time we are tempted to promote ourselves, to promote our status, to promote our position, to promote our accomplishments, to promote our spirituality with other Christians, it is the same temptation that Jesus experienced. We are pursuing not God's glory, but rather our own glory and our own self-promotion. Now folks, it can be overt self-promotion, like the lady in the article. But that's very uncommon among Christians. We know better. So, ours is what? A lot more sophisticated and subtle. We're really good at being subtle self-promoters. There are very few Mohammed Ali's in the church who would say, "I am the greatest!" Instead, we find very polite ways to throw in a string of comments in a given conversation to make it clear that we are in fact the greatest. Or, to read our Bibles just a little more intently than everyone around us. Or to act like we're singing more intensely than the person beside us. And on and on it goes. We pursue our own glory in so many ways.

So how does Jesus's response to temptation help us in dealing with the boastful pride of life? Let's talk about how to apply Jesus's victory. I want to reduce Jesus's response to this temptation to two ways of thinking. They're the two ways that we should respond every time there is a temptation to promote ourselves, to seek our own glory. This is how we should think. It's how Jesus was thinking, and I've pulled the one statement He made and the context back in Exodus. I've pulled those together into two brief responses. These are what we need to do. These are the responses we need to make. Number one: when you're tempted to promote yourself in any way, whether it's your business acumen or whether it's your spirituality, or whether it's your wonderful example as a husband or wife or child, or whatever it might be—we're tempted in all those ways—whatever it is, when you're tempted to promote yourself, to pursue your own personal glory, remember this: *I am made to promote God's glory, not my own.* Jesus lived to promote the Father's glory, and He would not promote His own at the Father's expense. There're so many passages that describe this. If you go back to Isaiah 49, that's one of those Servant passages in Isaiah, talking about the Messiah, and it makes this very point. But I want you to turn to John. The gospel of John, and look at chapter 5, verse 41. Jesus said, "I do not receive glory from men; but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves." He says, I am not about personal glory. "I have come [verse 43] in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me [in my father's name]." "How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?"

You see what Jesus is saying to them? He's saying, "Listen, let me tell you what your real problem is. You're so busy pursuing the boastful pride of life, protecting your position, promoting yourself, that you will not respond to the glory of God, here in the person of the Son of God." But Christ Himself said in verse 41, "I'm not about receiving glory from men. I'm not about pursuing that." Look over chapter 8. Chapter 8, verse 49: "Jesus answered,"—after being accused of being a Samaritan and having a demon; nothing like name-calling—"Jesus answered, 'I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. But I do not seek My glory.'" There He says it very bluntly. I'm not about seeking my own personal glory. That's not what I'm about. Verse 54: "Jesus answered, 'If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, 'He is our God.''" Jesus said, "Look, I'm not here to pump Myself up. If I am glorified, it will be the work of the Father. I am here to glorify God." He was living as a perfect human being should live, and that meant that His whole life was

devoted not to His own personal glory, but to the glory of God. You see it in these other examples as well.

So, if you're going to overcome the temptation to self-promotion and pursuing personal glory, remind yourself as Jesus so often reminded those around Him: you are made to promote God's glory, and not your own.

Secondly, and this is, I think contained in Jesus's response to Satan as well. If it brings God glory to promote or exalt me, then He will do it in His way and in His time. I'm not going to promote myself. If I'm going to be promoted, it's going to be God who does it. And isn't that exactly what God Himself said about Christ? Turn back to Philippians. Philippians chapter 2. You know this passage. After rebuking the Philippians for being selfish and pursuing their own way with empty conceit, he says, verse 5:

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW. . . and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus said I'm not going to exalt Myself. But He knew there was a time coming when in God's way and in God's time He would exalt Him. But He wouldn't take the matter into His own hands. This is how we have to respond when we're tempted to promote ourselves and to pursue self-glory. Remind ourselves, as Jesus did, that we were made to promote God's glory, not our own, and that if God promotes me or exalts me that brings Him glory, then He will do it in His way and in His time, but I'll not do it. By the way, this other passage, Luke 14 is an interesting one, because Jesus is giving His disciples counsel and He says, "If you go to a banquet, don't seek out the chief seats. Go and find the lowest seat and let the one who is hosting the banquet invite you to the chief seat." There's a powerful lesson in that, that Jesus Himself kept, and for

us as well. Jesus told Satan if He were to seek His own self-promotion, it would be testing God; it would be stealing from God's glory. In essence, Jesus was saying this: "I don't need to promote Myself. If God wants to do that, if it will bring God glory to promote Me, then He'll do it in His own way and in His own time. I'll wait for Him."

This is how we need to think when we're tempted to self-promotion, either with others or in our own minds. And by the way, the temptation comes both ways. Sometimes it comes with others, but there are people who are arrogant in their own mind and are content to keep it to themselves, how much better they are than everyone else.

Now this passage folks, is great preparation for the Lord's table for two reasons. One, because it reminds us of our sin, and how it is ever-present with us. As in the first temptation, the desire to satisfy the appetites of the body contrary to the revealed will of God, as that is a common experience. Even so, it's a common experience to pursue our own glory instead of God's glory. Not only are we driven by the lusts of the flesh, but we're driven by the desire for personal glory, the boastful pride of life. But there's another reminder here. Our Lord never succumbed, not even one time to that temptation, to any of these root temptations. Our Lord said no to the temptation to satisfy the desires of His body outside the will of God. And our Lord said no to the temptation to pursue self-glory at the expense of God's glory.

So, as we partake of the Lord's table, we enjoy the benefit of Christ's life and His death. Because in His death, our violations of these things, our sins in these areas, are paid for. The wrath of God against my pursuit of self-glory was paid for at the cross. But also, His life, that perfect life, that life seeking only God's glory, in justification is imputed to my account. And God treats me as the forgiven sinner, and you if you're in Christ, as if you have never sought your own glory, but only God's. That's the miracle of the life and death of Jesus Christ. Let's pray together.

Our Father, we do this in remembrance of our Lord, in remembrance of His perfect life, but more in remembrance of His violent death as His life was poured out, taken from Him in one sense and yet laid down voluntarily by Him in another. O God, we thank You that it pleased You to sacrifice Your own Son for sinners like we are. We thank You and praise You. We thank You for this way to remember what our Lord has done for us in His perfect life and His

substitutionary death. Lord, help us to arm ourselves with the same mind that Christ had, as we studied tonight. Help us as we go from this place and when we're tempted to self-glory, to self-promotion, to pursuit of our own glory at the expense of Yours, O God, help us to remember that we were made to bring You glory, even as our Lord remembered and lived throughout His life, and help us to remember that if it ever suits You to exalt us, then You can do it in Your way and in Your time, but we will not do it. O God, give us the resolve and the grace to see growth in this area. May we say no to temptation more frequently this week when we're tempted like this. We pray in Jesus's name and His sake, amen.