



Part 8: “The Temptation of the King – The Template for Spiritual Victory”

Matthew 4:1-11

Why the Inclusion for the Temptation of Jesus in the Gospels?

1. To show the kingship of Jesus through His victory over Satan
2. To show the pattern that Jesus used for victory as a template for all of us to use for spiritual victory

Elements of the Confrontation

1. The Temptation by Satan wasn't just Satan's doing, it was God's – Matt. 4:1 (Mark 1:12)
2. The Place: The Judean Wilderness (unfriendly, uninhabitable, uninviting) – Matt. 4:1
3. The Circumstances: Jesus was fasting in preparation for the beginning of His 3-year ministry and mission – Matt. 4:2
4. The First Temptation: Turn stones into bread - Matt. 4:3-4 (Deut. 8:3)
5. The Second Temptation: Jump off the Temple – Matt. 4:5-7 (Psalm 91:11-12; Deut. 6:16-17; Exodus 17:1-7)
6. The Third Temptation: Worship Satan as a shortcut to realizing the promises of God - Matthew 4:8-10 (Deut. 6:13)
7. The Final Act: God sent angels to minister to Jesus – Matt. 4:11



Growth Group Study Guide for December 11th – 18th

Getting Started

Group Discussion: How would you describe the battle with temptation in a Christian's life? What does it include? How prevalent is it? What have you found helpful in dealing victoriously with temptation? What doesn't work?

Digging Deeper

1. Read Matthew 4:1. We're not told here why the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted. What is one reason why you think He did? _____

While God the Father did not tempt His Son Jesus, He did allow Satan to do it. Certainly at least reason for this is that it allows Jesus' example of facing temptation to be given to us for our instruction and application.

How does Job serve a similar example of the temptation of Jesus? (See Job 1-2)? _____

2. Read Matthew 4:2. There was more going on in the wilderness than just the temptation by the devil. What was Jesus also doing while there and why do you think He was doing it? _____

Satan used the opportunity of Jesus being physically weak to tempt Jesus. God used this time to test His Son in purifying and preparing Him for the mission He came to fulfill. Jesus's three-year ministry would include even more spiritual battles and temptations in His march to the cross and would change human history forever. This testing would prove that Jesus was up to the test. Of course, fasting is also for the purpose of prayer and fellowship with the Father. This would also prepare Jesus for the temptations He would face as well as the launch of His ministry.

3. Read Matthew 4:3-4. In this first temptation Jesus's answer in quoting Deuteronomy 8:3 gives us an idea of what Satan's temptation was all about. Read Deuteronomy 8:3, checking it with the context, and discuss what the purpose of this first temptation was: _____

Satan wanted Jesus to step outside of God's timing and use His own divine power for selfish reasons. He also wanted Him to satisfy His own physical desires and needs at the moment. Why would have these have been outside the will of God for Jesus? _____

4. Read Matthew 4:5-7. With this second temptation, Satan also used Scripture. What does that tell us about our enemy? Why do you think Satan tried to use a "proof-text" from Scripture to justify his temptation? _____

Satan used Psalm 91:11-12 but he twisted it's meaning and application suggesting that Jesus should force God's hand by intentionally putting Himself in harm's way so that God would have to save Him.

This time Jesus used Deuteronomy 6:16-17 to rebuff Satan's temptation and his twisting of Scripture. Read these verses in their context and discuss what the purpose of this second temptation was: _____

We should not test God by asking Him to prove Himself to us. In faith asking God to fulfill His promises is much different than in doubt trying to manipulate Him to do something we want Him to do at the time we want Him to do it.

5. Read Matthew 4:8-10. With this temptation we really see the heart of Satan. What is his ultimate desire and how does that stand in complete opposition to God? _____

What did Jesus say to in response to Satan and what does this show us about Jesus and His power? _____

In His defense, Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:13. Read this verse in its context and describe how it is a perfect response to Satan's temptation: _____

6. Read Matthew 4:11. At the right time and in the right way God did fulfill His promise from Psalm 91 and other Scriptures to care for Jesus. God also keeps His promises to us. There is no need to seek to manipulate God into doing what He promises to do. God is good and He will always be there for us in his perfect timing.

Conclusion: The confrontation between Jesus and Satan didn't end in defeat for Jesus or even in a draw. Satan suffered a triple defeat in His attempt to turn Jesus away from His mission. Why do you think Satan was so intent on defeating Jesus? What are the implications if he had been successful?

Next Sunday we'll learn the lessons from the temptation of Jesus and how we too can win when we're tempted.

Close in Prayer

Pray for our church's outreaches this week and coming up with our Christmas Eve Services.