

## THE TEMPTATIONS OF THE LORD JESUS

Luke 4:1-13

(Not entirely original with me)

**Introduction:** No doubt every human being has temptations. Some are very weak, but some are very strong and sadly, too many are yielded to and sin happens. "Why me?" one may ask, but it needs to be remembered the the Lord Jesus also underwent temptations. Right after He was baptized, He went off to be by Himself to focus on His ministry to to talk with His heavenly Father. While in a quiet place, all alone, He had a visitor and that visitor was Satan. Satan wanted to try to get Jesus side-tracked from His purpose for being there so he offered Jesus several temptations.

### I. THE FIRST TEMPTATION (*Matthew 4:3-4*)

1. Satan's first line of attack concerned the hunger the Lord was experiencing since He had been on a 40 day fast.
2. His approach was that surely God would not want any of His creatures to go hungry and doing without food just couldn't be the will of God.
  - Satan worked on Adam and Eve by suggesting that God was withholding good fruit from them.
  - Satan worked on Job the same way in suggesting that God didn't want Job to be uncomfortable.
3. What if Jesus had followed Satan's suggestion and made food and eaten?
  - Personal pleasure would have come before God and Jesus would never have gone to the Cross.
  - If physical needs have priority over spiritual needs, then Jesus would never have preached the gospel.
    - All Jesus' life was spent feeding the hungry and healing the sick, thinking of others.
    - Jesus would never have spoken on "self-denial."
4. Jesus set an example for believers in His response to Satan's first temptation.
  - Physical hunger was what God wanted for Jesus at that time.
    - Food is a necessity, important to physical life, but there is no real life apart from obedience to the will of God.
    - Depriving ones self in doing God's will is good for it tests one's faith and strengthens it.
  - Israel hungered in the wilderness by the will of God.
    - Israel's faith was strengthened as they learned to trust God for their every need.
  - The type of person is not to be found in asserting his/her rights, but in his/her submission to God.
    - The measure of a person is his/her submission to God.
  - Satan would have a a person look out for him/herself and act independently of God.
5. There are beliefs today that "man does indeed live by bread alone..." It is materialism and economics that makes the world go round.
  - Material needs are important, but they are not first or primary.
  - Physical appetites are indeed God-given, but believers are to set aside those appetites for higher spiritual priorities.
6. Follow Jesus' example in turning Satan down concerning physical things.

## II. THE SECOND TEMPTATION (Matthew 4:5-7)

1. The temple was the center of Israel's religious life and it was predicted that the promised Messiah would make a public appearance at the temple, especially on the roof of the temple.
  - The Jews expected their promised Messiah to be introduced in some spectacular blaze of glory and what Satan proposed would do exactly that.
2. Satan wanted Jesus to demonstrate a spectacular feat saying that God's faithfulness would be best demonstrated in this manner.
  - It would also put God to the test.
  - If God was the Father of Jesus, let Him prove it in such a way that nobody could miss it.
3. Had Jesus done this thing, the Jews would have immediately hailed Him as the Messiah and the new Kingdom would have been started on might, not on what Jesus came to do.
  - The moral and spiritual foundations of the Kingdom would be over shadowed by the spectacular.
4. Satan quoted a passage of scripture but had used it out of context and it was inconsistent with the other verses around it.
  - Jesus reminded Satan that testing something is not trusting.
    - Satan quoted from the 91st Psalm and Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy 6:16, "***...You shall not tempt the Lord your God...***"
  - This was putting God to the test, forcing God's hand but it is not faith, but failure when one demands that God prove Himself in something spectacular.
5. Christians often today try to put God to a test insisting on something spectacular - a miracle and such.
  - Often Christians demand that God "jump through their hoop" for God to act as told.
  - Sometimes faith healers are called in to heal, leaving God the option of healing or sickness.
  - Then there are some who use the "spectacular" in preaching or witnessing trying to get someone to "believe."
    - God rejects all actions. Jesus came to establish a Church, not a Circus.

## III. THE THIRD TEMPTATION (Matthew 4:8-10)

1. Satan failed on his first two attempts and is so frustrated that all pretense is torn away and Satan now shows his worst in a straight and simple proposal.
2. Satan proposes to exchange his most valued possession for Jesus to worship him.
  - Give up your kingdom for mine Satan says.
  - Satan had always desired to be "number One" and to receive homage from the Messiah, the Son of God would be worth any price.
3. For Jesus to bow the knee to Satan is to be in his service forever and to bow to Satan is to be in rebellion against God and Himself, which is entirely inconceivable
4. Psalm 2 gives a description of today's world and such is the kind of kingdom Satan offers Jesus in exchange for (His) Messiah's Kingdom.
  - God invites His Messiah to ask of Him and He will give the nations as an inheritance.;
  - Satan offered Jesus his broken-down kingdom.
  - Satan wanted Jesus to worship him, rather than he (Satan) fall before Jesus, the Messiah.

- To fail to surrender to Jesus, the Messiah, and to serve Him is to repeat the sin of Satan and to bow to him rather than to God's Son, Jesus.
- God alone is to be worshiped, exclusively and obediently.
- *"...You shall worship the Lord Your God, and serve Him only..." (v10)*
- True worship involves service.

5. Sadly there is much "lip service" in what is called "worship" today. A person says that he/she worships God in the woods or on the lake on Sunday has some real misunderstandings about true worship.
  - True God's hand is in the woods and on the lake and God can be praised for such beauty but where is this person's service? Worship and service must come together like love and marriage.... "you can't have one without the other...."
  - Often Christians try to bring people into God's kingdom without telling, showing what all is involved. That's Satan's way....."what they don't know, won't hurt them....etc..."

## **CONCLUSION:**

1. Temptations should be expected by every Christian.
2. Temptation often comes just moments after something great or some kind of commitment.
3. Satan's temptations are God's tests for he cannot tempt outside the will of God or beyond one's capacity to resist.
4. Temptation often tries to get one to sin by doing something that appears "religious" even biblical.
5. Temptation is best resisted with the Word of God (as Jesus used the Word in His temptations).
6. Submission to God's will is not being inferior but obedient.
7. Satan is always trying to get people to throw off their commitments to God and follow him (Satan).
8. May every believer be able to follow Jesus' example of resisting Satan's temptations.