

Spiritual Discernment

Lesson 3: Knowing the Enemy
Springs Reformed Church
High School Class
March 15, 2015

Briefly review the main points from last week's lesson.

- the serpent is a *creature* who was created *good*
- the serpent has personal *identity* and is highly *intelligent*
- the serpent's question is used to cast *doubt* on God's word
- the serpent wants Adam and Eve to judge right and wrong for themselves
- part of the serpent's subtlety is mixing truth with error
- this is the first test of discernment (**failed**)

Refer to the parallel accounts in Matt 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13.

- How is Satan referred to in these passages?
- What are the similarities and differences between the temptation in the Garden and the temptation in the wilderness?
- How does Satan cast *doubt*? How does he appeal to the *senses*? How does he appeal to *pride*?

Notice how Satan uses scripture in the temptation of Christ.

- How does Satan manage to distort God's word when quoting it precisely?
- How is this tendency commonly seen today?
- What important principle of biblical interpretation is illustrated in this account?

Concluding thoughts:

- What is the difference between *freedom* and *autonomy*?
- Why is man's desire for autonomy ultimately futile?
- How important is careful discernment in light of the deceiver's subtlety?
- How important is discernment in light of our radical fallenness?
- How often should we expect to be tested?
- What does it mean to be on guard?
- What confidence can we gain from Heb 4:12?

Review: Read Genesis 1-3. Notice the contrast between the perfection of the original creation and the corruption that comes as a result of sin. How do the animal skins (v. 3:21) foreshadow the atoning work of Christ and demonstrate the inadequacy of man's efforts (v. 3:7)?

Homework: Look up several more passages that refer to Satan (directly or indirectly). What else can we learn about *who* he is, *where* he came from, and *how* he operates in the world today? (Hint: what do his different names & titles tell us?)