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12 Lessons from the Temptation of Jesus (II); Matt 4:1-11

GPBC

7.8.18

Introduction – We looked at the first five lessons last week. (1) The enemy will attack where we are most vulnerable. (2) The Word of God is our main weapon against temptation. (3) We need discernment and wisdom to rightly understand and apply the Word. (4) Satan’s main tactic has always been to create doubt concerning God’s Word. (5) Trust God’s Word above our feelings and our circumstances and the voices around us that oppose God’s will.

The 2 overarching themes of this passage have been (1) Satan is crafty and cunning. He will leave no stone unturned when it comes to temptation. He will charm. He will attack. He will offer apparent reasonable advice. He will present sin as greener grass. He will offer good things as distractions from the better things. He will go to great lengths to convince us that God’s way is not best and is not sufficient. The enemy is persistent. (2) God’s Word is sufficient. It is a sufficient weapon against every single ploy and plot of the devil. It is sufficient in providing us with the gospel of salvation. It is sufficient to equip us for every issue we face in life. God’s Word is truly the words of life.

This morning we’ll see 2 lessons from the third temptation and then we will discover 5 doctrinal, life lessons by viewing all 3 temptations together.

- I. The Third Temptation (vv8-11)
 - a. Lesson Six: God’s path is always the right path, the best path. Don’t take the short cut that Satan offers.
 - i. The end result of Jesus’ mission is that all kingdoms would be subjected to Christ. However, the God-ordained means of Christ’s exaltation over all things would be His suffering.
 - ii. Phil 2:8-11 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name.
 - iii. The devil comes along with his limited authority as prince of the power of the air and offers Jesus a short cut to the kingdoms. He can have all the kingdoms without the suffering.

Humiliation, pain, and rejection can be avoided. You can have it all now if you will just worship me instead of the Father!

- iv. All the glory without the cross. Sounds like a pretty good deal doesn't it? I mean don't we naturally in our humanity avoid pain at all cost and pursue comfort and security. And yet if Jesus would have taken the short route to glory the resulting devastation would be incalculable.
 - v. First, if there is no cross, there is no salvation. Second, the devil's authority is for a limited time. When his defeat is completed all those with him will be defeated as well. All would have been lost if Jesus would have bypassed the cross.
 - vi. Jesus, however, did not bypass the cross for a quick pass to glory. The Father's eternal pleasure was worth the mission's temporary pain. He said, "Be gone, Satan!"
 - vii. Later in Matthew's gospel Satan presents this very same temptation to Christ from a most unexpected, unsuspecting source, one of his own disciples. 16:21-23
 - viii. Oh how crafty he can be – he can make temptation sound like good advice from a friend.
 - ix. Don't take the short cut! God's path is always the right path, the best path. Let us learn from Christ – the eternal pleasure of the Father far outweighs the temporary trials of the faith. Rom 5:1-5
- b. Lesson Seven: Stand firm in the Word and the devil will finally flee.
- V11. If Jesus would have given in at any one point along the way, Satan would never leave him. But now he's gone and the angels were sent by the Father to minister to the Son.
- i. Listen to the precious promises of James 4:7-8. "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you." That's exactly what Jesus is doing here! I think James has been reading Matthew!
 - ii. Oh dear friends, at times the temptation will be fierce, it will be intense, it will be inviting, it will even sound reasonable, but in the end we will lose far more by giving in than we gain by standing firm.

- iii. Hold fast to God's Word. Stand on His truth. Cling to His promises. Follow His path. And the devil will flee and the Father will minister!

II. The Three Temptations as a Whole

- a. Lesson Eight: There was a purpose in Jesus' temptations. V1. The Father was not trying to trap the Son or discourage the Son or belittle the Son. There was a grand purpose.
 - i. The Father is up to something really wonderful and really beautiful and really glorious. The Father is going to bring something really good out of this pressing, straining, grieving trial of temptations. Vv1-10 is the heat of the battle. The battle is raging.
 - ii. James 1 says God tempts no one, but He does allow us to be tempted at times. He does test our faith in order that we might continue to know further and deeper just how frail we are and just how satisfying He is. Just how undeserving we are and just how gracious He is. Just how doomed we are without Him and just how saved we are with Him.
- b. Lesson Nine: He completely identified with sinners and yet He never sinned.
 - i. Remember our study on the baptism of Jesus in 3:13-17? Jesus identified with sinners by submitting to a baptism for sin.
 - ii. And even more than that, He not only identified with sinners through the act of baptism, He also identified with sinners through the trial of temptation to sin. And yet He never sinned. The temptation of Jesus introduces us to a whole new level of just how far our Lord identified with us and yet remains sufficient to save us.
 - iii. Jesus has not done something that everyone else has done, and that's how we know He's different, that's how we know He's sufficient, that's how we know He, and only He, is Savior.
- c. Lesson Ten: Jesus, the second Adam, succeeded where the first Adam failed.
 - i. Adam was tempted with food and he failed. Jesus was tempted with food and He succeeded. Adam was tempted once and he failed. Jesus was tempted 3 times and He

succeeded. Adam was tempted while living in paradise and having the freedom to enjoy all the other fruit of the Garden and he failed. Jesus was tempted in the wilderness after fasting for 40 days and He succeeded.

- ii. Let me tell you why that's so important. With Adam as our representative, when he fell, all of us who are in him also fell. All humanity represented in our first parents fell when they fell. Now, in the second Adam, which is Christ, He is the representative of all God's people. When He succeeds, all we who are in Him succeed as well!
 - iii. Rom 5:19 – For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.
 - iv. Purpose – all in Adam die – all in Christ live.
- d. Lesson Eleven: Jesus succeeded where the children of Israel failed, which illustrates this point: The Law is unable to save because we are unable to keep it. Jesus is able to save because Jesus kept it
- i. We've already observed that Jesus defeated temptation by adhering to the Word of God. It's interesting to note what Scripture Jesus quotes.
 - ii. In the first temptation Jesus quotes Deut 8:3 which says that God let the people grow hungry in the wilderness and then He gave them manna, bread, to eat so that they would know man does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.
 - 1. They were led into the wilderness and Jesus was led into the wilderness. They were hungry and Jesus was hungry. They grumbled about the bread God gave them, Jesus resisted the bread the enemy offered him. He trusted in the Father and His provision. BTW – where God guides, He provides!
 - iii. In the second temptation Jesus quotes Deut 6:16 which says you shall not put the Lord your God to the test as you did at the waters of Massah. Ex 17 – the people grumbled because they were thirsty and said have we been led out here to die? Why did you take us from Egypt?

1. Here instead of questioning God and testing God as did the people of Israel, Jesus trusts in God.
- iv. In the third temptation Jesus quotes from several places throughout Deut, basically the first commandment in Deut 5:7 – You shall have no other gods before me.
 1. The children of Israel were literally fashioning a golden calf while God was commanding them to worship and serve only Him. That’s what Jesus does here.
 2. He succeeded where the children of Israel failed. The Law can’t save you but Jesus can.
- e. Lesson Twelve: Jesus succeeded where you and I have failed. And boy, have we ever failed! If you’re like me, the more lessons we’ve seen in this passage, the more I’ve realized just how far short of the glory of God I have fallen. I’ve given in. I’ve taken the short cut. I’ve sought the greener grass. I’ve rationalized and excused my sin. If you look at Wil’s record apart from Christ, I’ve blown it.
 - i. Some have said these 3 temptations represent the 3 categories of sin listed in 1 John 2:16 – the desires of the flesh (#2), the desires of the eyes (#1), and the boastful pride of life (#3).
 - ii. If I’m being honest, I have failed at every single point.
 - iii. Heb 4:15 – For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.
 - iv. At every point where we have failed, He has succeeded.

Conclusion – John Newton – I am a great sinner, but Christ is a great Savior! That’s really the main point of the temptation narrative. Yes there is much for us to learn from Jesus’ example, but the main lesson is that we have lost against temptation time and time again, and He has won against temptation time and time again. Hallelujah! What a Savior!