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MATTHEW

Chapter 04

TEMPTATION – THE DEVIL’S HANDIWORK

Opportunity only knocks once, but temptation leans on the doorbell.

Last Sunday I found a wallet packed with money down by the church." Did you give it back?"
"Not yet. I'm still trying to decide if it's a temptation from the devil or the answer to a prayer."

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. In our last study, John the Baptist was our principal character.
 - 1. John’s ministry was the ministry of repentance.
 - a) He wasn’t shy about it, and he surely didn’t apologize for it.
 - b) He was a bit strange in his appearance, his style was unconventional, and the place he chose for ministry was a bit out of the way – but his results were amazing!
- B. We also discovered that repentance is not just saying “I’m sorry.”
 - 1. True repentance is to think differently; to change our mind, to regret our sin and to change our conduct!
 - a) It is changing our course, turning away from our selfish ways and heading to the Lord and His plan for our lives!
 - (1) So, John was not preaching a quick, temporary solution, he was asking for a commitment that would change people’s lives, and many came and were baptized in the Jordan.
 - (2) Remember we saw the “fit” and the “counterfeit”.
 - (a) The most “fit” of course was Jesus when He came to be baptized by John, and we also saw the “counterfeit” in the Pharisees and the Sadducees.
 - 2. **Chapter 3** closed Jesus’ baptism with verse **17**a voice **came from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”**¹ and that is where we will pick up in this teaching.

II. **MAT 4:1 THEN JESUS WAS LED UP BY THE SPIRIT INTO THE WILDERNESS TO BE TEMPTED BY THE DEVIL.**

- A. In my opinion, anytime we see this word “tempted”, we must balance it with **Jam 1:12-16 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him. (13) Let no one say when he is tempted (*enticed to sin*), "I am being tempted (*enticed to sin*) by God"; for God cannot be tempted (*not temptable*) by evil, and He Himself does not tempt (*enticed to sin*) anyone. (14) But each one is tempted**

¹ [*The New King James Version*](#) (1982). Nashville: Thomas Nelson, p. Mt 3:17.

(enticed to sin) when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. (15) Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. (16) Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

1. There are two different words used here although when it translates into English – it simply comes out “tempted”.
 - a) So, we know that Jesus is God – we know that He cannot be “tempted” by evil, but remember, He has come to earth as a man – to show man “the path to eternal life”.
 - b) Therefore, how He handles the devil’s “temptations” are extremely important to us!

III. **MAT 4:2-4 AND WHEN HE HAD FASTED FORTY DAYS AND FORTY NIGHTS, AFTERWARD HE WAS HUNGRY. (FOR MOST OF US THAT TRANSLATES INTO ABOUT 3 HOURS ☺) (3) NOW WHEN THE TEMPTER CAME TO HIM HE SAID, "IF YOU ARE THE SON OF GOD, COMMAND THAT THESE STONES BECOME BREAD." (4) BUT HE ANSWERED AND SAID, "IT IS WRITTEN, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT BY EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS FROM OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'"**

A. Satan will often attack on the physical level first!

1. We saw him do the same with Eve and it was very successful.
 - a) Jesus was hungry!
 - (1) **1Jo 2:15-16** tells us: **Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (16) For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.**
 - (2) This “lust of the flesh” gets us into all kinds of trouble!
 - (a) Most of the time satan doesn’t have to go any further than this.
 - (b) Many folks do not have control over this area and if their flesh wants something it gets it.
 - (i) But Jesus has control over his flesh. And He uses God’s word out of **Deuteronomy 8:3** to put satan in his place.
 - (ii) Satan goes to plan b.

IV. **MAT 4:5-7 THEN THE DEVIL TOOK HIM INTO THE HOLY CITY, SET HIM ON THE PINNACLE OF THE TEMPLE, (6) AND SAID TO HIM, "IF YOU ARE THE SON OF GOD, THROW YOURSELF DOWN; FOR IT IS WRITTEN, 'HE WILL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE OVER YOU'; AND 'ON *THEIR* HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, LEST YOU DASH YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'" (7) JESUS SAID TO HIM, "IT IS WRITTEN AGAIN, 'YOU SHALL NOT TEMPT THE LORD YOUR GOD.'"**

A. Since Jesus had already taken it up to [the spiritual level](#) – so does the devil.

1. He quotes **Psalms 91:11-12** but does it incorrectly.
 - a) **Psa 91:11-12** For He will give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways. (12) In their hands they shall bear you up, lest

you dash your foot against a stone.

- b) Notice that he left out “to keep you in all your ways”?
 - (1) Just like with Eve – some of the truth but not all of the truth.
 - (2) The devil knows the bible more than most people do and is not afraid to use it to his advantage, though it will always be distorted in some way!
 - (a) Jesus balances it out with **Deuteronomy 6:16** **"it is written again, 'YOU SHALL NOT tempt THE LORD YOUR GOD.'"**
- c) John would call this temptation the “boastful pride of life.”
 - (1) Eve desired to be “wise”.
 - (a) What “boastful pride of life” thing can satan use against us?
 - (b) Perhaps this is why Paul said to the Philippians: **Phi 4:11b** **...I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:**
 - (c) And again in **Heb 13:5** **Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU."** (If he was the writer of Hebrews – which I think he might have been.)
 - (i) You see, if we are not content with the Lord and what He has given us – we will be prime targets for this temptation.

B. The 3rd test is psychological.

V. **MAT 4:8-11** AGAIN, THE DEVIL TOOK HIM UP ON AN EXCEEDINGLY HIGH MOUNTAIN, AND SHOWED HIM ALL THE KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD AND THEIR GLORY. **9** AND HE SAID TO HIM, "ALL THESE THINGS I WILL GIVE YOU IF YOU WILL FALL DOWN AND WORSHIP ME." **10** THEN JESUS SAID TO HIM, **"AWAY WITH YOU, SATAN! FOR IT IS WRITTEN, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND HIM ONLY YOU SHALL SERVE.'** **11** THEN THE DEVIL LEFT HIM, AND BEHOLD, ANGELS CAME AND MINISTERED TO HIM.

A. Now he is trying to get inside of Jesus’ head!

- 1. He offers Him power riches and glory while He is on the earth!
 - a) Eve desired to be “like God knowing good from evil”.
 - b) I think we get the full impact of this temptation when we look at the cross!
 - (1) They both knew Jesus’ destiny and satan is providing Him a way out – a back door!
- 2. Jesus again uses the word of God from **Deuteronomy 6:13** and **10:20** to put him in his place.
 - a) You can almost feel and hear the contempt in Jesus’ voice as satan tries to stand on the holy ground of His Father – when he asks for worship in exchange for all this power!
 - (1) But how would we do if we were offered all of this?
 - (a) You see if we are not content to LIVE ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD and NOT PUT THE LORD OUR GOD TO THE TEST and willing to WORSHIP THE LORD OUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY, we will not fare as well as Jesus did.

- (i) We need to be focused. And that focus has to be the Lord and Him only!
- (ii) Otherwise our enemy will be successful in tempting us in one of these areas.
 - (a) Notice that satan left and the angles came!

VI. CONCLUSION

A. **MATTHEW 4:12** Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. **13** And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, **14** that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: **15** *“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: **16** The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned. **17** From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”** **18** And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. **19** Then He said to them, **“Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”** **20** They immediately left *their* nets and followed Him. **21** Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, **22** and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him. **23** And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. **24** Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them. **25** Great multitudes followed Him—from Galilee, and *from* Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.*

1. John is arrested, and we will see later, decapitated for pleasure.
 - a) And Jesus begins his own ministry and continues John’s ministry of repentance.
 - (1) In doing so – he begins to recruit disciples to help Him with His ministry.
 - (2) And we begin to see the power of God drawing the sick and the hurting to the great healer of lives!

B. Remember satan will attack on the physical level, the spiritual level and the psychological level!

1. So be alert, and keep your armor on!
 - a) **2 Cor 10:4-5** For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, **5** casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, **6** and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.