CONQUERING TEMPTATION

Matthew 4:1-11
1/22/2017

INTRODUCTION: V. 1-2

The Purpose of Testing
--To teach
--To mature

The Time of Testing
--Satan tempted after Christ's victory
--Satan tempted at Christ's weakest moment

YOU CAN CONQUER TEMPTATION!
. . . By Responding to the Enemy's Attacks Like Jesus Did!

Observe Satan's points of attack and Christ's defense:

I. THE FIRST TEMPTATION (v. 3-4)

A. Satan's Suggestion: "Satisfy yourself - independently" (v. 3)

B. Christ's Defense: "Depend on God's Word - continually" (v. 4; Dt. 8:3)

II. THE SECOND TEMPTATION (v. 5-7)

A. Satan's Suggestion: "Surrender yourself - foolishly" (v. 5-6)

B. Christ's Defense: "Don't test God - unBiblically" (v. 7; Dt. 6:16)

III. THE THIRD TEMPTATION (v. 8-10)

A. Satan's Suggestion: "Submit yourself - disobediently" (v. 8-9)

B. Christ's Defense: "Devote yourself to God - exclusively" (v. 10)

CONCLUSION: V. 11

CONQUERING TEMPTATION

Matthew 4:1-11
1/22/2017

INTRO: Throughout history (since Eden), men have battled with temptation. On the one hand men have attempted to avoid it, flee from it, resist it, isolate themselves from it, ignore it, or even deny it; on the other hand, they have succumbed and yielded to it.

THE PURPOSE OF TESTING (v. 1-2)

Jesus was "led up" by the Holy Spirit into this confrontation. Why the set up? From God's perspective it was a test to prove Christ's righteousness. From Satan's, it was a temptation to get Him to sin.

NOTE: God allows Satan to tempt (ex. Job); but Satan is like a dog on a leash--he can only go so far.

Why does God test?

- TO TEACH

  God tested Israel to reveal her heart and teach her dependence (Dt. 8:2-3).

  God tested Christ to prove His sinlessness (to demonstrate Christ's righteous character after the Father's declaration in chapter 3).

- TO MATURE

  Time spent in battle with temptation is not a waste when God is glorified, the believer edified, and Satan mortified!

THE TIME OF TESTING (v. 1-2)

The Tempter came at just the right time (at a suitable "season" - Luke 4:13).

- SATAN TEMPTED AFTER VICTORY

  Mk. 1:12 - Immediately after Christ's baptism/anointing/hailing as "The Beloved Son" in whom the Father was "well-pleased."

  Cp. Israel's temptation - right after redemption from Egypt (Ex. 15).

  "Let him who thinks he stands . . ." (I Cor. 10:12).

- SATAN TEMPTED AT CHRIST'S WEAKEST MOMENT

1. Jesus faced bad circumstances - wilderness ("the Judean desert"), hot barren, dry.

2. Jesus was hungry because He had fasted forty days prior to testing.

   Hunger makes one physically weak and tends to cause one`s attention to move from spiritual to physical.

*Contrast Adam's fall in perfect circumstances with Christ's victory (the second Adam) in the worst.
We can't blame circumstances!

* YOU CAN CONQUER TEMPTATION . . .
by responding to the Enemy's attacks like Jesus did!

THE CONFLICT OF TESTING (v. 3-10)

Satan tempts in the areas of:

lust of the flesh
lust of the eyes
pride of life
(I John 2:16)

I. THE FIRST TEMPTATION (v. 3-4)

A. Satan's Suggestion - "Satisfy yourself - independantly" (v.3)

This test is aimed at "the lust of the flesh."

Satan picks up on the Father's declaration and says, "If you are the son . . ." as the Father said you were.

NOTE: Satan tempts in the areas of:

1) Relationship - "Son"
2) Ability - As the Son, He certainly had the ability - Jesus could just say the words and the stones would immediately become bread. Jesus is called the "word" (Jn. 1:1).

LOOK UP: **Col. 1:16, Heb. 11:3, Jn. 1:3, 10 -** creation
Mt. 8:26 - storm
Jn. 11:43, Mk. 5:41 - raise dead
Mt. 9:6 - heal
Lk. 6:10 - restore a withered hand
Lk. 8:32 - cast out demons

3) Rights - Jesus being Creator of all deserved the right to eat.

Satan is suggesting that Christ go ahead and satisfy himself independently of God's Will.

2. Christ's Defense - "Depend on God's Word - continually" (v.4; Dt.8:3)

Note Christ's response:

1) He did not ignore the temptation (took positive action to overcome it).

2) He did not defend Himself. He could have said, "Satan, this feat is no problem for me, but I refuse to obey you."

3) He did not reason with Satan.

Note Christ's Weapon: The Word of God

1) This shows the Bible's authority.

2) This shows the Bible's continuing relevancy.
The verse was originally stated some 1,400 years ago, yet still was useful.

3) This shows the Bible`s varied applicability.
Was originally given to Israel, and now is used against Satan.

4) This shows the Bible's suitability - to handle needs of all occasions.

5) This shows the Bible's inspiration - "God-breathed" (II Tim. 3:16); "every word" (v. 4)

NOTE: Though Christ's words while on earth had equal authority with the written Word--He appealed to the written Word!
How much more should we?

The verse Christ used was Deut. 8:3.
(Read and explain Dt. 8:1-3)
God's supernatural feeding of Israel with "manna," teaches the principle that life is not sustained merely by physical means, but by spiritual, supernatural provision.

God is teaching that the source and sustenance of life depends on Him!

God promises over and over to meet our needs (Phil. 4:19; Mt. 6:8, 33).

Life is more than food; there are deeper dimensions to life.

There are times when we must refrain from grabbing immediate satisfaction - if it contradicts God's will, or God's means of getting it (See Jn. 4:31-35).

B. THE SECOND TEMPTATION (v.5-7)

1. Satan's Suggestion - "Surrender yourself - foolishly" (v.5,6)

v.5) Christ's bodily transport to Jerusalem (cp.Acts 8:39 - Phillips transport)

Whereas in the first temptation a need (lack of food) already existed, in the second, Satan suggested that a need be created.

Satan now appeals to the "pride of life"

To be more persuasive, Satan now uses Scripture to justify his suggestion. By countering Christ's Scripture with Scripture, Satan in a sense is implicitly saying: "so you want to battle with Scripture oh!, Well take that!"

Satan's use of Scripture shows:

1) His respect for it (at least when he is dealing with others who respect it)

2) His extensive knowledge of it (cp. His messengers II Cor.11:15).

3) His misuse of it. Satan misquotes Ps.91:11. The liar (Jn.8:44) leaves out the phrase "in all your ways" Note: In the context of Ps. 91:11 God's promise to protect is limited to "all your (righteous) ways" or "all a man's ways that please God", not to protect man no matter what he does.

v.6) In this temptation Satan is implying:

"So you claim to be God's Son and you claim to trust His Word...If so, why don't you demonstrate your sonship and prove the truth of God's Word by putting Him to a test - a spiritual test? If you won't use your own divine power to help yourself let your father use His divine power to help you. If you won't act independently of the Father, let the Father act. Give your Father a chance to fulfill the Scripture I just quoted to you."(MacArthur, p.93).

2. Christ's Defense - "Don't test God - unBiblically" (v.7; Dt.6:16)

v.7) Christ reverses Satan's tempting appeal by comparing Scripture with Scripture, while Satan opposed Scripture to Scripture. Satan's use contradicted other passages that warned against testing God. (cp. Num.14:22-23; Ps.19:13; Dan.5:22-23)

Jesus Quotes Deut. 6:16 from the Septuagint (Greek translation of the O.T.) exactly, which shows His approval of translations)

Read & explain Deut.6:14-16.

"Tempt" = To prove the quality of something; to put to the test.

The point is: God's trustworthiness is not to be found out by testing Him.
Such testing is absolutely wicked! Why? It is contrary to faith. It insults God.
When you have to say to God: "prove it" you are calling Him a liar.

Examples of testing God:

1) Gideon's fleece.

2) Jews seeking a sign (Mt.12:39; 16:4)

Application: Men test God today by:

1) Saying "I won't believe without proof"

2) Seeking signs (ex. tongues etc.) rather than believing His word that you are genuinely saved and Baptized with the Spirit the moment you truly believe the Gospel.

3) Thinking (in pride) that God will make a special allowance for you to do something against His word and get away with it.

4) People who arrogantly sin and dare God to do something about it.

B. THE THIRD TEMPTATION (v. 8-10)

1. Satan's Suggestion - Submit yourself-disobediently" (v.8-9)

Satan appeals to the "the lust of the eyes."

Luke 4:5 says that Satan showed Christ all the kingdoms "in a moment of time" (this shows the mysterious ability of Satan)

In this temptation, what Satan offered could be received by Christ in 3 ways:

1) the quick way
2) the easy way
3) the wrong way

a. Satan offers the quick way (wrong time)

Satan tempted Christ with that which He (Christ) ultimately had every right to, but which was not yet His to take (Christ's reign was future!).

We must always wait for God's time (ex. I Sam. 8:7 - Israel's premature asking for a king).

APPLI: of young people who commit fornication and participate in something that God says to wait for marriage to have (Heb. 13:4).

b. Satan offers the easy way (cheap price)

Satan offers Christ a kingdom without a cross. (see Mt. 16:23 - Satan again tempting through Peter)

(Only a single act of worship is commanded)

APPLI: God's will is not easy street! EX. Advertisement of promises of how to make big bucks $ fast and easy! God's plan for us to eat our bread is by sweat and work!

Satan now shifts (from his previous 2 temptations) from "prove to me" to "take from me."

See Luke 4:6 - It "is delivered unto me . . ."

Ask the question: Did Satan have the right to offer the kingdoms of this world?

In a certain sense, it is a legitimate offer, because there would be no temptation in it if it was untrue.

Satan does in a sense have control of the world's present system (II Cor. 4:4; Jn. 12:31; I Jn. 3:19).

But Satan is actually an illegitimate ruler who usurped this authority from man--the rightful heir of creation--in Eden. Satan is offering stolen merchandise.

c. Satan offers the wrong way

Satan has always desired the prerogatives that only belong to God (Is. 14:13-15).

--Satan wanted worship
--Satan wanted a specific manner of worship ("by falling down")
(such worship would imply that he was God)

Christ taught us by example: The end (a kingdom) never justifies the means (false worship).

Satan offered the wrong means to gain a desireable end.

APPLI: People who say "Think of all the teenagers we could bring to the Lord if we only make our music contemporary Christian rock."

2. Christ's Defense - "Devote yourself to God - exclusively" (v.10)

The phrase "Get thee hence" (go away) implies that such a suggestion to worship Satan is utterly unthinkable.

Jesus again places total authority on the Word of God. He quotes Deut. 6:13 (Turn to it and explain)

The verse puts heavy emphasis on the exclusive worship of Yahweh.

NOTE: Heb. word order: "Yahweh your Elohim you shall fear, and Him you shall serve, and in His name you shall swear."

All other worship (other than to God) is idolatry! (Ex. 20:1ff)

NOTE: Christ is proven to be God because He received worship. (Ps. 2:8, 12; Mt. 8:2, 9:18, 14:33, 15:25, 28:9, 17; Jn. 9:35 & 38, 20:28-29).

CONCLU: Mt. 4:11 - Results of victory = "Then the devil leaveth him . . ." (cp. Ja. 4:7).

In every temptation Jesus ignored the bait (NOTE: not the temptation situation) and responded with principle! He did not say: "I think, I know, I feel, I believe" but rather "It is written."

(NOTE: Jesus quoted an often over-looked O.T. book - Deut.)

APPLI: How many verses from Deut. can you quote? (this book is often hidden and overlooked by Christians)

APPLI: This lesson shows the need for Bible memorization.

NOTE: 1) All quoted verses must correspond to context; otherwise when you think you are waving a sharp double-edged sword, you are only waving imitation plastic.

2) Christ's quotation were not just to take the defensive (to silence Satan) but the offensive (to give Himself authority for His position and conduct).

ILLUS: story of a man who was trying to teach his dog obedience. He threw a large piece of meat on the floor and each time the dog went for it, he would swat the dog and say, "NO." Soon all he would have to do is say the word. Eventually when the meat was thrown out, the dog would not even look at it, but would focus his eyes on his master, waiting for his approval or denial.

**Keep your eyes focused on the Master! and cling to the Word of God!