

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture texts: **Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13.**
- B. From Roy H. Enoch (3-27-94).
- C. We do not know the exact place of the temptation, but we know something about it.
 - 1. It was not a luxurious resort.
 - 2. It was in "the wilderness," which was an isolated, lonely place identified with hunger and danger. He "...was with the wild beasts..." (Mk. 1:13).
- D. Our situation may be very different, but we can learn many lessons from His temptations.

I. FIRST, SATAN IS NEVER VERY FAR AWAY.

- A. Mark indicates that this was immediately after His baptism (Lk. 4:1-2; Mk. 1:12-13).
 - 1. Matthew records it immediately after His baptism (4:1).
 - 2. Luke does not record the baptism, but begins: "Then Jesus, being filled with the HS, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness" (4:1).
 - 3. Jesus had just recently been baptized:
 - a. For a short time after baptism, we are excited and focused on the Lord.
 - b. We find Bible classes and worship services exciting as a new Xian.
 - 4. After the "honeymoon," reality sets in and we are more easily distracted.
- B. He fasted 40 days and nights. And "afterward..., He was hungry" (Mt. 4:2).
 - 1. When in the Spirit in fasting and meditation, He may not have noticed the hunger.
 - 2. It seems that the temptation came after the 40 days of fasting when He was hungry.
- C. The devil knows our weakest times.

II. SECOND, SATAN USES DOUBT TO KEEP US FROM GOD.

- A. Satan questions our basic convictions (Lk. 4:3,9).
- B. The devil successfully used this approach with Eve in the garden (Gen. 3:1, 4-5).
- C. Satan still uses questions to arouse doubt in Xians. To doubt...
 - 1. ...the existence of God, the Bible, or whether there is a heaven or hell.
 - 2. ...whether grace is adequate to save one as entrenched in sin as you may be.
 - 3. ...whether you can hold out to be faithful, or be forgiven when you sin as a Xian.
 - 4. ...whether the dedicated are really loved and accepted, or just hypocrites.
 - 5. ...whether the church can accomplish some great work that God has commanded.

III. THIRD, SATAN'S ATTACK IS NOT ALWAYS THE SAME.

- A. Satan tried to make Jesus **doubt** God.
The devil said: "Make your own bread from stones." That didn't work (Mt. 4:3-4).
- B. Then, Satan tried to make Jesus **exploit** God.
To throw Himself from the temple would exploit the care of angels for Him (Mt. 4:5-7).
- C. Satan tried to make Jesus **forsake** God.
To have all the kingdoms of the world was easy, just bow to Satan and worship him rather than the Father (Mt. 4:8-10).
- D. When Jesus resisted the devil, he departed from him for a while (Lk. 4:13). Satan will never give up. He will always seek "an opportune time."
- E. There is no indication that Jesus resisted the devil with any supernatural aid. He used the same Word of God that we have (1Pet. 3:15; Jas. 4:7-8).

IV. **FOURTH, OUR TALENTS SHOULD BE USED TO SAVE AND SERVE.**

- A. Satan tested Jesus to see if He was really “about His Father’s business.”
 - 1. Would He misuse His power which was for the Father’s business for His own personal comfort?
 - 2. The devil offered Jesus the acclaim and the kingdoms of the world. He could have had a short cut to worldly reward (Lk. 4:5-7).
 - 3. He showed that He was still focused on seeking the lost.
- B. What are we doing w/our best abilities, and our time?
 - 1. Many with great ability to teach, and influence others, will only use those skills for pay, but will not use them for the teaching of God’s word.
 - 2. Too many of our most talented young people are not even encouraged by their parents to develop their abilities to teach God’s word, but to focus in an area where they can make more money and gain worldly recognition.
- C. The Bible teaches us that we came from God and our ability is to be used for His glory.
 - 1. Our real worth is in spiritual service, not in athletics, good looks, or popularity.
 - 2. God’s love and reward is not dependent on these worldly standards.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Everyone recognizes that temptations are everywhere and dangerous.
- B. We often do not realize the benefits of strengthening our character and dedication.
- C. We can learn from the temptations of X how Satan may try to reach us.
- D. Temptation is not sin, but yielding is sin.
- E. Let us follow the examples of X by focusing on the word of God that we may grow stronger and resist Satan.
- F. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.