

The Gospels

A VERSE-BY-VERSE STUDY OF THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW – WEEK FOUR

Last week we met John the Baptist and saw Jesus baptized in the Jordan River. John came to prepare the way for Jesus, and Jesus submitted Himself to John's baptism to make a way for us.

Remember, if it is true about Jesus, it is true about you. This week we will see how Jesus is acquainted with our suffering, struggles and pain as He is led into the desert by the Holy Spirit to be tested by the devil.

This week's theme is: Our flesh nature will always be a part of our soul. Though our flesh desires and appetites may never cease to test our self control, but as His disciples – we like He – must rely on the strength of God's Word and the power of His Holy Spirit to sustain us when tempted. We must learn to discipline our appetites and desires – submitting them continually to God through the filter of His Word.

MATTHEW | CHAPTER FOUR

Tried, Tempted, Tested and Prepared

- ***The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the desert.***
 - Jesus, after He was baptized, fasted for 40 days and 40 nights.
 - Seasons of 40 represent a complete season of testing. Jesus was completely tested in His flesh, His humanity.
 - God does not tempt Jesus, but He allows Him to be tempted by the devil.
- ***The devil is also called the tempter. The author of all temptation is the devil.***
 - The devil approaches Jesus with the same bag of tricks he approached Adam and Eve with in Genesis 3. (Read Genesis 2 & 3)

- The devil always calls God's promises, His character and His nature into question.
 - Did God really say?
 - Is God powerful enough?
 - Will God sustain you?
 - Will God protect you?
 - Will God provide for you?
 - The real questions for Jesus that day was... Are you really the Son of God? The devil wanted God to prove Himself. He tested God.
- **Jesus is confronted with three tests:**
 - 1. The provision test.**

Notice, the Scriptures tell us Jesus was hungry! He could have easily created a few loaves of bread as they devil bid Him do, but instead he quoted Scripture in response to Satan. (See Deuteronomy 8:3)
 - 2. The safety/fear test. (The Death Test?)**

After Jesus answered with Scripture – notice that Satan tempts him next using Scripture to support his test. (See Psalm 91:11-12) We would be wise to remember that Satan knows Scripture better than we do. Yet, he always shapes, fashions and twists them to suit his purpose rather than finding purpose in them.

NOTE: The devil's words – If you are the Son of God... Save yourself. This will be a haunting theme when Jesus hangs upon the cross at the end of Matthew as the Pharisees mock and scorn Him.
 - 3. The power/worship test.**

Everything Satan offered Jesus – Jesus already had the power and authority to do for Himself. As Christ demonstrated Holiness and Surrendered to the Father's will, Satan was confronted with the only power he cannot truly resist. At Jesus' command the devil left Him and the angels came to attend His needs.

Jesus calls the disciples.

- Simply note: That John and James were in their boat with their father, but Jesus did not call him. All four of those first disciples left their boats and the only way of life they knew to follow Jesus.
- Sometimes following Jesus requires us to give up and leave what we know – what we otherwise feel bound to – and simply FOLLOW HIM.
- Jesus preached the same message John the Baptist preached.
- When the Gospel of the Kingdom of God is preached and released, every affliction and disease is healed.

Questions for reflection:

1. When I am tempted, what do I seek first?
2. When I am tempted, what is my confession?
3. Am I seeking my own desires or God's desires?
4. Am I seeking my own glory or God's glory?

End Notes:

¹ NAS Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible with Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries. Copyright © 1981, 1998 by The Lockman Foundation