
SESSION VI

Summary: Temptation: Jesus and ours; its origin.

A. The Temptation of Jesus

1. Read Matthew 4:1-11
2. Willed by God. See also Mark 1:12
3. **First Temptation: Stones into Bread.**
 - a. Temptation is to **misconstrue** Divine Sonship as the power to do miracles.
 - b. Jesus' response demonstrates He depends not on His power but on His Father's.
 - c. Distinction between "power" and "authority." Temptation to act on the basis of power (unconnected to God), but Jesus chooses connectedness (Authority).
 - d. The "First Line of Defense" against Temptation: The Scriptures, *It is written...*
4. **The Second Temptation, "Throw yourself from the pinnacle of the Temple."**
 - a. Again the temptation is to misconstrue what it means to be the Son and act selfishly.
 - b. A miracle would prove the greatness of Jesus' 'faith'. Reflects a world that wants faith proved and is unwilling to trust in God. Win the world by miracles, not the cross. No doubt this could appeal to Jesus (i.e. remove the Cross and unbearable suffering; take the easy way). But our Lord presses on to the Cross.
 - c. Satan quotes Psalm 91:11 but omits, *in all your ways*. Promise of protection in all normal activities; he lies by omission. Christians need to know the *whole* truth.
5. **The Third Temptation:** All the kingdoms of the world. Here the temptation is expedience: the ends justify the means.
6. Angels come and minister to Jesus—Once again this is a *major step in God's salvation plan* as evidenced by the presence of angels.

B. Our Temptations

1. We have original sin.
2. Thorough knowledge of Scripture is our only defense.

C. Jesus' Assessment of the Devil- read John 8:43ff

1. Those who refuse to believe (v.44) "*...are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires.*"
2. *He* (Satan) *was a murderer from the beginning...*" an allusion to the consequences of sin => **death!**

D. The problem of Evil- Read James 1:12-15

1. in Matthew 4:1-11 the author conceives of the devil as a visible "person."
2. Biblical witness is that evil, personified in the Devil, can fall upon individuals or groups, overwhelm them and overpower their ability to make rational judgments.
 - a. Demonic possession is a true possibility in this world.
 - b. Evidence of evil exists
 - c. Remember that "God tempts no one to sin!"
3. Often modern people use the devil as an excuse to relieve them of responsibility.
 1. James 1:13-14 states that all temptation begins with our own sinful desires. (e.g. *wife tempted to buy an expensive dress: "The Devil made me do it." Husband: "Why didn't you do like Jesus and say, 'Get behind me Satan.' Wife: I did. 'It*

looks good from back here, too! Martin Luther: "You can't keep the birds from flying, but you can keep them from making a nest in your hair!"

2. v. 15. The result of temptation => Sin and death.
3. Like Peter (Matthew 26:69ff) we often court disaster when we give temptation an opportunity. Example- kids getting in with the wrong crowd.
4. Temptations can also vary with the time of life:
 - a. **Youth-** sins of the flesh; each generation things they're the first to discover sex.
 - b. **Middle Age-** sins of pride and ambition; to be a "success" whatever the cost.
 - c. **Old Age-** arrogance, unteachability, pride and self-righteousness; Not that all potential is gone, all that is left is the past... see how great I have been when compared to the new generation...
 - d. **All of these temptations lead to damnable sin and death!**
5. Jesus temptations were just like ours.