

2-10-08

Jesus – In Every Way Like Us
Part 2 – Ever Been Tempted?
Mark 1:9-13

A man and his wife were shopping at a mall and a shapely young woman in a short, form-fitting dress strolled by. The man's eyes followed her. Without looking up from the item she was examining, his wife asked, "Was it worth the trouble you're in?"

A guy who was trying to lose weight, but came to the office one day with two dozen donuts.

His co-workers asked him why he got donuts if he's trying to diet, and he answered, "Well, as I came to the corner where the donut shop was, I told God that if He wanted me to buy some donuts to have a parking spot open right in front of the donut shop. And on the eighth time around the block, there it was!"

TEMPTATION: an enticement or invitation to sin, with the implied promise of greater good to be derived from following the way of disobedience. The supreme tempter is Satan, who is able to play upon the weakness of corrupted human nature and so to lead people to destruction.

Corinne – counter in the cash room of Fortunoff's – only paper slips or else...
Counters at churches – ushers moving money – how much is in that offering?

Pastor Jerry spoke last week about Jesus' baptism by John – in the wilderness, and our text picks up right with that event in Mark. Jesus had to identify with sinful humanity and submit to John's baptism of repentance, even though He was sinless. Keep that thought in mind...

Mark 1:9-13 (NLT)

9 One day Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and he was baptized by John in the Jordan River. 10 And when Jesus came up out of the water, he saw the heavens split open and the Holy Spirit descending like a dove on him. 11 And a voice came from heaven saying, "You are my beloved Son, and I am fully pleased with you."

12 Immediately the Holy Spirit compelled Jesus to go into the wilderness. 13 He was there for forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was out among the wild animals, and angels took care of him.

Mark – background ... short and concise – fast moving – action packed.

"immediately" or "at once" – used constantly throughout this gospel

Introduction (1-15) – capsulizes the entire gospel – tells the reader the plot.

Messianic Secret – device in Mark – No one gets it – no one realizes who He really is.

The religious leaders order His execution; the crowd has turned on Him and now jeers Him at the cross; His own disciples desert Him. Only a Roman Soldier realizes the truth at the end of Mark's Gospel and says, **"Truly this is the Son of God."**

Only the reader has been aware all along who Jesus really is. We were told in the introduction. They all should have caught on earlier – it seems plain, doesn't it? Don't do the same thing. I hope you realize who Jesus really is.

Jesus – the Son of God – The One anointed with the Holy Spirit has victory over Satan according to other wilderness temptation passages found in Matthew and Luke – but we don't get that clear of a picture in Mark's gospel. There are no details given in our text. His victory is assumed and confirmed by the rest of the gospel. That is one reason why I chose this passage to use as our text for today.

For all – Satan is out to disrupt the plan of God and he will use everything at his disposal to accomplish that goal in your life.

“Jesus’ obedience to god is affirmed and sustained in the wilderness, the precise place where Israel’s rebellion had brought death and alienation in order that the new Israel of God may be constituted”

You Are Not Alone – being with others can make things worse (VIDEO CLIP)

Heb 2:18 - Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. – NIV

Heb 4:15-16 - For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are-yet was without sin. 16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. – NIV

Don't shy away from God in prayer when you are tempted or even if you fall prey to temptation and sin – He instructs us –that's when we should pray with confidence.

We think – Woe is me – no one else is getting hammered like this – no true. Whatever you face or will face is a common human temptation and there are others.

1 Cor 10:13 – No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ directs us to resist temptation, promising blessedness to those who do. The gospel also directs us to pray for deliverance from exposure to temptation and from surrender to it. The Lord will not allow is people to encounter temptation beyond their Spirit-given ability to resist.

There is no easy fix. – We all are tempted, BUT Jesus can relate to us in our temptations. He was in all ways like us – so He can sympathize with our weaknesses and help us succeed in Him.

The Wilderness is the place the Israelites were led by God to wander for 40 years to be tested. Jesus is led by the Spirit of God into the wilderness to be tested for 40 days.

Israel failed their testing period – Jesus (Israel’s representative) passed with flying colors – but this is not revealed clearly by Mark. Jesus was tempted by Satan directly to add extra intensity to the event. Satan, with all power and authority over evil is tempting/testing Jesus, who has All Power and Authority over everything including Satan. However He goes through this experience to relate to us as humans.

Wilderness – undesirable place – loneliness, darkness, detestable creatures, no seed, no food, no water, nothing. In a place like this, it is easy for Satan to attack a person.

Wilderness = a dangerous place – spiritually, emotionally, and even physically.

Jesus – Our Example – Temptation in the Wilderness

Although the Son and Beloved by God, no advantage is given Him. He continues in the wilderness 40 days – he must remain submissive. The Spirit does not allow Him to abandon this after His baptism.

Temptation in the wilderness (desert) after His baptism in the wilderness ...

40 days – a fixed amount of time – not forever although a long time – has great symbolic significance as does 40 throughout the Bible. Moses stay on Mount Sinai – Elijah’s wandering in the wilderness at Mount Horeb.

Matt 4:1-4 - Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. 2 After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

4 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Deut. 8:3

First temptation – to turn stones into bread – a temptation to use His divine power to satisfy His own physical need (hunger) – **provision** - of God

Satan challenges ... save your hide by supernaturally changing rocks into bread. Jesus could do this, but that would violate trusting in God for his provision. He is our example.

God is trustworthy – He is Jesus’ Father and will provide bread – He was Israel’s Father and provided their bread. (manna)

He is our Father and will provide all of our needs (Phil. 4:19) – don’t compromise –

Don’t cave in to the temptation that you need more than what God provides.

Matt 4:5-7 - Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 6 "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: Satan uses Scripture to trap Him.

"He will command his angels concerning you,

and they will lift you up in their hands,

so that you will not strike your foot against a stone." Ps. 91:11-12 OUT OF CONTEXT

7 Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Deut 6:16 - IN CONTEXT

Second temptation – to jump off the Temple – He was to perform a spectacular feat so the people would follow Him. – **protection** – God promises protection (Brian’s accident)

Satan also knows the Word and manipulates it for his own purposes. Psalm 91 promises protection from perils – not that one should purposely put themselves in danger to be protected supernaturally by God. (groups allowing snake bites and drinking poison).

We can know the Word of God through His Spirit who guides us into all the truth. He is the author of Scripture and is in us to teach us the Truth.

Matt 4:8-11 - Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 9 "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." - Satan lays the cards on the table.

10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" - Deut. 6:13

Third temptation – worship Satan to gain authority over and control of the world – trading allegiance from God to the enemy for personal gain. – **purpose**

Deut. 6:13-16 – prohibits idolatry – Jesus quotes this to Satan – you cannot worship God and Satan – worship only the true God.

Worship evil – has tangible benefits.

Worship God – has eternal benefits.

What was the temptation for Jesus in this 40 day wilderness experience? Satan knew who Jesus was – his deity and capability. He calls Jesus to use His supernatural powers to save His own flesh. “If you are the Son of God” – more appropriately – “Since you are the Son of God,”

One motive lay behind all these temptations: Satan wanted to destroy Jesus’ mission. The real purpose of Satan’s temptation was **that he might be worshipped instead of God**. It’s the same purpose he has in tempting you and me.

- provision – protection – purpose - - same things we are tempted about today.

It’s All In Your Mind –

All temptation starts in the mind and begins with a thought that we then act upon. We have to make a decision – one way or the other.

“It’s not the first glance that’s a problem, it’s the second stare.”

2 Cor. 10:5 - We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Eph 2:3 – All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts.

Heb 3:1 – Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.

Immerse yourself in the Word of God – There’s power in Scripture as Jesus showed.

Heb 4:12 – For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Study Scripture – memorize Scripture – it's your only offensive weapon.

We can see where we really stand in our own integrity when we are tempted. How do we react when we are alone? God already knows how weak we are. Where are our areas of weakness? Sometimes, we know ahead of time, but sometimes we are blind-sided.

Sometimes it's best to know when to just stay away – S.C. Golf story with snakes.

Chuck Swindoll – On Okinawa I would take a little bus to the place where we had our Bible study: I would get off the bus at a particular corner. I had to walk down about four blocks and then uphill about two. Okinawa has more bars per mile than any island in the South Pacific. I discovered that the answer to temptation was to keep on looking straight ahead. I looked neither to the right nor to the left. And I've discovered that what works in Okinawa works here at home. When your eyes turn to the right or to the left, you're on your way to grabbing the bait.

Don't Blame God –

James 1:13-15 – When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14 but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

God has the right to test His people – as in the Exodus – to prove the genuineness of their faith, BUT – humans have no right to test God unless requested to do so by God (Mal. 3:10) – Now test me in this ... about tithing and experiencing blessing from God.

Testing is not comfortable – actually it puts us in a difficult situation, but God's purpose for us is always good. It builds integrity or at least measures our integrity.

Temptation doesn't have to lead to failure – we have God's word on it ..

Jesus promised to empower His followers with the same Spirit who empowered Him – By the power of the Holy Spirit we can obtain victory over Satan's attempts to cause us to disobey God and fail the "test."

It's never over. Temptation will be a reality for us as long as we are alive and Jesus tarries. When He returns and ushers in God's Kingdom in fulfillment of prophecy, then finally temptation will be done away with. Satan will be dealt with permanently (Rev. 20).

Jesus was tempted by Satan in parallel pressures experienced by Israel in the wilderness. Israel turned from God – Jesus trusted God fully for provision, protection, and purpose.

Israel refused to trust God and disobedience resulted. Jesus only has a perfect and whole relationship with the Father and is qualified to lead us to such a relationship.

Until then, we are equipped with the Holy Spirit – the Word of God – and access to God in prayer – as well as fellowship with supportive brothers and sisters in Christ in the Church to pray with us and for us. We have been given the power to be victorious, but we still fail more than we want to admit.

Summary –

Everyone is tempted – You are not alone.

God is not trying to entrap you – Rom. 8:28 – It can work for good.

Remain close to Him – find His way of escape for you. - He promises a way out.

Jesus understands – expect Him to rescue you.

Pray as Jesus taught – “Lead us not into temptation...”

When tempted to plunge into the old life: someone once said...

“You fool, do you not know that you are carrying God around with you.”

Finally - this by Robert Raines – Creative Brooding

Long wooden shoots had been built in the forest to slide tree trunks down the slope to the valley and into the river. They were hundreds of yards long, smooth and polished inside, and the foresters used them as well. They would sit on the floor of the shoot or on an axe-handle, and go tobogganing down to save themselves the trouble of walking. Well, a workman caught his foot in a hole in the shoot and couldn't get it free, and at that moment he heard a shout of warning, which meant that a trunk was on its way down. He saw the thing coming, and as he still couldn't free his foot, he hacked it off with an axe and jumped clear just in time. He was crippled for life, but at least he was alive.

Oh God, give me the courage to cut out of my life that lesion which is threatening my family's happiness, that indulgence which is sapping my strength of purpose, that doubt which is leading me to disobey You, that disobedience which is causing me to doubt You. Oh, God, heal my faithlessness and restore me to health.

Jesus said in Matt 5:29 -

If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

Temptation is not sin – yielding to temptation is sin. Jesus was tempted but did not sin – we can do the same because He is our example.

Although we know we will face painful trials in this life,

2 Peter 2:9 - “The Lord knows how to rescue Godly people from trials.”

God Loves Us! – and wants us to succeed in this life in Him.