

JESUS CHRIST AND HIS TEMPTATION: DEALING WITH TEMPTATION MARK 01:12–13

Introduction

The importance of understanding temptation cannot be overstressed. The believer faces temptation every day of his life. For this reason, he needs to gain a thorough understanding of what temptation really is and how it is to be overcome.

- I. Temptation follows a person's decision (v. 12).
- II. Temptation is used by the Spirit (v. 12).
- III. Temptation is a desert or wilderness experience (v. 13).
- IV. Temptation is of Satan (v. 13).
- V. Temptation is met by God's help (v. 13).

I. *Mark 01:12 The Temptation of Jesus Christ*

Jesus was tempted immediately after making the decision to be baptised. His baptism was a momentous decision, for Jesus was declaring His total commitment to God and to God's mission. The decision was to lead to His death in less than thirty — six months. The point to see is that His decision was immediately attacked by Satan. Jesus was tempted immediately after His clear-cut decision to follow God and to launch God's great mission of salvation. (See *The Temptation of Jesus Christ*, Mt. 4:1-11; *Temptation*, Lk. 04:01-02; *God's Way: Faith, not Proof*, Mt. 4:1-11.)

Thought 1. Great and wonderful things happen to a person who makes a decision for God. (See *Salvation*, Rom. 1:16.) Satan, as the adversary of God and man, knows this; therefore, temptation always follows a decision for God. Satan always fights against a person when that person...

- is set free from selfishness and sin by God; when that person is set at liberty to live a life of love and joy and peace. (See *Forgiveness*, Eph. 1:7.)

Gal 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

Eph 1:7 *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.*

- is set free from death and the fear of death by God, when that person is set at liberty to live a life of confidence and assurance — the confidence and assurance that he has become a child of God.

Rom 8:15 *For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."*

Gal 4:4-6 *But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”*

Heb 2:14-15 *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil — and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

- is set free from condemnation and hell by God, when that person is set at liberty to live life knowing that he will never be condemned by God, that he will live forever with God, when that person knows that nothing will ever separate him from the love of Christ.

John 5:24 *“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”*

Rom 8:38-39 *For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Just imagine all that is involved in the above: the depth and the richness, the assurance and the confidence, the joy and the motivation that fills a life that receives so much. And not only does this happen to the person who truly makes a decision for God, but all this shows itself through the person’s life to others. The family and friends of the new convert see the depth and richness of his changed life. The result is heart-warming: usually some of them also come to know Christ as their personal Saviour.

The adversary to God and man is bound to tempt the new convert. Satan is bound to attack, attempting to overthrow the person’s new decision for God. He attacks by causing the person to doubt, to question, to choose another way, to undertake another task, to seek something else. Satan knows that he cannot leave the new convert alone lest that person become strong in the Lord and in his witness for the Lord.

MATHEW 04:01–11 THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS CHRIST

This was not the only time Jesus was tempted.

1. Satan tempted Jesus through Peter when Peter tried to divert Him from the cross. Jesus revealed what really was behind Peter’s apparent concern: “Get behind me, Satan” (Mt. 16:23).
2. Jesus commended His disciples by saying: “You are those who have stood by *me* in my trials” (Lk. 22:28).
3. Jesus faced the severest temptation of His life in the Garden of Gethsemane. It was there that Satan made a last-ditch effort to divert Christ from the cross.

In referring to Christ's experience in Gethsemane, Scripture says to all believers: "In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood" (Heb. 12:4; see Lk. 22:44).

Thought 1. The devil knows just where to tempt a person.

- 1) *In the wilderness or desert:* when a person is without bread, when he really has need. This is the temptation that appeals to the sinful nature, the lust of the flesh.
- 2) *On the pinnacle, the highest point of the temple:* when a person is before multitudes. This is the temptation that appeals to pride — the pride of life (fame).
- 3) *On a high mountain,* when a person sees what is available — sometimes rightfully his, sometimes just desired.

This is the temptation that appeals to the lust of the eyes. ■

LUKE 04:01–02 TEMPTATION (PERIRAZO)

The word temptation is used here in both a good and a bad sense. In the good sense it means to test, to try, to prove. It does not mean to seduce into sin. Its purpose is not to defeat or to destroy. The idea is not that one is tempted, seduced, enticed, and pulled into sin by the Holy Spirit (see Jas. 1:13); but one is tested, proved, strengthened, reinforced, and purified through the trials of temptation.

In the bad sense, it means to tempt, to seduce, to entice, and to pull someone away from God into the way of sin, of self, and of Satan (Mt. 4:1; 1 Cor. 7:5; 1 Th. 3:5; Gal. 6:1; Jas. 1:13-14).

Jesus was led into the wilderness by the Spirit *to be tested*. The Spirit did not seduce or entice Jesus to do evil, but He led Jesus into circumstances whereby He could learn obedience and discipline. Through such trials, Jesus was to be perfected and enabled to succour all those who suffer trials (Heb. 4:15-16; 5:8).

Six things need to be said about overcoming temptation.

1. Temptation has its bottom root in passion and appetite (Mk. 7:20-23; Jas. 1:14). It comes directly from within, from man's heart, not from without. And it does not come from God. "For God cannot be tempted by evil; nor does he tempt anyone" (Jas. 1:13). God does not tempt any man in a bad sense. What He does is look upon His people as they endure temptation, and He strengthens them to bear the temptation. By such He teaches them discipline and obedience for a greater work (Rom. 8:28; 2 Cor. 1:3-4; Heb. 5:8; 1 Pet. 1:6-7).
2. No man confronts any temptation that is not common to all men (1 Cor. 10:13).

3. God does not allow the believer to be tempted beyond what he is able to bear. There is always a way to escape (1 Cor. 10:13).
4. Jesus Christ understands temptation. He was tempted in all points just as all men are tempted, yet He never sinned (Heb. 2:18; 4:15).
5. Jesus Christ is a sympathetic High Priest in helping the believer through temptation (Heb. 2:17-18; 4:15).
6. Temptation is overcome (a) by submitting to God and resisting the devil (Jas. 4:7-8; 1 Pet. 5:8-9), and (b) by using and obeying Scripture to combat temptation (Lk. 4:4; see Deu. 4:8; 4:12; 6:13, 16; 8:3; 10:20). ■

MATHEW 04:01–11 GOD’S WAY: FAITH, NOT PROOF

Jesus Christ was tempted three times by the devil. He was tempted to prove that He was the Son of God. What was wrong with proving His deity?

Proof is not God’s way; faith is God’s way. Proof is not what God wants; faith is what God wants. God wants to be trusted and loved. He wants to be freely loved, not loved because of force — because some persons are constrained by irrefutable proof. There are facts, plenty of proofs that He is the Son of God; but in the final analysis, an act of faith has to be taken. No one has seen God. God cannot be known by the physical senses. To know God, a person has to leap by faith, reach out for God in an act of belief, believing that God will reward his faith.

Heb 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Jesus Christ had come to establish and construct the way of faith. Therefore, Jesus Christ had to reject anything that led men away from the life of faith. Note that all three temptations had to do with man’s senses and the physical world. If Christ had given in and secured the loyalty of men by feeding bread to the whole world, or by performing a spectacular miracle, or by taking over the kingdoms of this world, life would end and end soon. Why? Because all die. All waste away. The world is physical and material, corruptible and dying, deteriorating and decaying. It does not last. That is just the way of the physical world and all within it. This is the very reason Jesus Christ has come — to conquer the physical world of decay and death and to usher in the eternal world of the spirit — by the way of faith.

Therefore, Jesus Christ had to live the life of faith Himself. He had to walk the way of faith, of trusting and believing God Himself. He had to reject the devil’s *proofs* and show and lead men by faith. □

ROMANS 01:16 SALVATION (SOTERIA)

*“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.” **Romans 01:16***

Salvation means deliverance, be made whole, preservation. From what does man need to be saved and delivered and preserved? Scripture paints five descriptive pictures of salvation, showing man’s great need.

1. Salvation means deliverance from being lost. Man is pictured as wandering about in the forest of life trying to go someplace, but unable to find his way. He is lost, and if he continues to stumble about through the forest of life, the under-brush and thorns of the forest will sap his strength and prick him to the point that he lies down and dies. His only hope is for someone to notice that he is lost and to begin seeking for him. This is where the glorious gospel of salvation comes in. God sees that man is lost and He sends His Son to seek and to save man.

Salvation means that Christ...

- seeks and saves man from his lost condition.
- sets man on the right road that leads him to eternal life.

Mat 18:12 *“What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety — nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off?”*

Luke 19:10 *“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”*

John 5:14 *Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, “See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.”*

John 10:9 *“I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture.”*

2. Salvation means deliverance from sin. It means deliverance from mistakes, from corrupt ideas and thoughts, from moral impurity and from a crooked and perverse generation. Sin is like...
 - an infection, a disease for which man has no cure.
 - a master that enslaves and will not let go.
 - a crooked and perverse world that man cannot straighten out.

Man’s only hope is for someone to discover a cure, someone with the intelligence and power to do it. This is where God steps in with His glorious salvation. God knows all about man’s infection and enslavement by sin, all about his crooked and perverse world: so He sends His Son to save man, to cure him and liberate him and

straighten out his world. Salvation means that Christ saves man from the terrible tyranny of sin, from...

- the infection of sin.
- the enslavement of sin.
- the crooked and perverse world of sin.

Salvation also does something else. It frees man from the pricking and burden of guilt and shame, and it plants within man's soul a deep sense of health and peace with God.

***Mat 1:21** "She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."*

***Luke 7:50** Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."*

***John 3:17** "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."*

***John 5:34, 40** "Not that I accept human testimony; but I mention it that you may be saved, yet you refuse to come to me to have life."*

***John 12:47** "As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it."*

***Acts 2:40** With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."*

***Eph 2:8-9** For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.*

***2 Th 2:10** And in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.*

***2 Tim 1:9-10** Who has saved us and called us to a holy life — not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.*

***Titus 3:5** He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.*

3. Salvation means deliverance in the future from all evil and corruption: from aging and wasting away, deterioration and decay, death and hell. It is the complete redemption of man's spirit and body at the end of the world. It is salvation from the wrath of God — salvation that saves a man from being

separated from God eternally. It is the life and exaltation which believers will receive at the final triumph of Jesus Christ. It is the salvation that will keep a man safe and preserve him both in time and eternity.

Man and his world are pictured as having a *seed of corruption* within their very nature, a seed of corruption that eats away causing them to...

- age and waste away.
- deteriorate and decay.
- suffer destruction and die.

Again, man is hopeless. He cannot stop himself and his world from death and destruction, but God can. God can save both man and his world; God can deliver them from the terrible fate of death and destruction. This is the message of salvation. God loves man and his world and wants to save them, so He sent His Son into the world to save them. Salvation is...

- the complete redemption of man's body and soul in the future: a redemption that saves man from the process of aging and wasting away, deteriorating and decaying, dying and being condemned to hell.
- the perfect deliverance from the wrath of God: a salvation that saves man from being separated from God eternally.
- the gift of life and exaltation: a salvation that will be given to believers at the final triumph of Jesus Christ.
- the presence of perfect assurance: a salvation of security and preservation both in time and eternity.

Rom 8:23-24 *Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has?*

1 Th 5:9-10 *For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.*

2 Tim 4:18 *The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

1 Pet 1:3-5 *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade — kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.*

1 Pet 1:9 *For you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.*

4. Salvation means deliverance from enemies and dangers. Man is pictured as walking in a world lurking with enemy after enemy and danger after danger. Man has to confront all kinds of enemies and dangers that attack both his body and soul, his mind and spirit. He faces all kinds of problems and difficulties, trials and temptations. No matter how much he may long for peace and security, he is forced to combat...

- a hostile environment
- an unknown universe
- unregulated urges
- an evil pride and ego
- unpreventable accidents
- a lust for more and more (possessions, fame, wealth, power)
- a savage world of nature
- an uncertain future
- inevitable aging and dying
- greed and covetousness
- dreadful diseases

Man is seen as helpless in overcoming all the enemies and dangers that lurk in the shadows of this world. But God is not helpless — God can *save* man; He can gloriously deliver man as he journeys along the road of life. This is exactly what salvation means. God delivers man from the enemies and dangers that war against him. But note a crucial point.

Salvation does not mean that God delivers man *from* experiencing difficulty and danger, not in this present world. God does not give a life free from the nature and circumstances of this world. What salvation does is deliver one *through* the difficulties and dangers of life.

Salvation means that...

- God gives *security and peace* of soul, no matter what happens.
- God gives *safety* independent of circumstances and environment.
- God gives inward strength and courage to bear the onslaught and attacks of *danger*.

Mat 8:25-27 *The disciples went and woke him, saying, “Lord, save us! We’re going to drown!” He replied, “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?” Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm. The men were amazed and asked, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!”*

Mat 14:30-31 *But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!” Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?”*

Luke 1:69, 71 *He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David. Salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.*

Acts 27:34 *“Now I urge you to take some food. You need it to survive. Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head.”*

Heb 11:7 *By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.*

2 Pet 3:10-15 *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.*

5. Salvation means to make well, to heal, to restore to health, to make whole both physically and mentally. Man is pictured as a suffering creature, a creature who...
- gets sick
 - wears out from aging
 - struggles against deformities
 - meets with accidents
 - suffers infirmities

Salvation declares that Christ is concerned with man’s suffering. Christ saves and delivers man, rescues and restores man in body as well as in spirit. He takes a man who suffers and makes him whole.

Mat 9:20-22 *Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. She said to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed.” Jesus turned and saw her. “Take heart, daughter,” he said, “your faith has healed you.” And the woman was healed from that moment.*

Mark 10:51-52 *“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him. The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.” “Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.*

Acts 4:9-10 *If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the*

people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed.

James 5:15 *And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. □*

EPHESIANS 01:07 FORGIVENESS

*In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace. **Ephesians 01:07***

The word *forgiveness* (aphesin) means to send off, to send away, to release, to let go. The word for *sin* (paraptomaton) means transgression, trespass, a falling by the way, or deviating from the way. All men...

- have transgressed the law of God
- have deviated from God
- have fallen from the way of God

Therefore, all men stand guilty of having broken the law of God, and the penalty for breaking the law is death. However, the blood of Jesus Christ brings forgiveness to men. How? Jesus Christ died *for man*. He took the penalty of sins and bore the punishment Himself. He was able to do this because He was the Perfect and Ideal Man, and as the Ideal Man, He could stand for and represent all men. When He died, He died as the Ideal Man, as the Representative for all men. Any person who really believes that Jesus Christ died for him is forgiven his sins. God takes his faith and counts it as the death of Jesus Christ. God sees the man as being *in Jesus Christ*, as being in the death of Jesus Christ. God counts the death of Jesus Christ for the death of the man. Therefore, the guilt and penalty for breaking God's laws are completely removed. The man's sins and guilt are sent away or washed away by the blood of Jesus Christ.

Acts 5:31 *God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Saviour that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.*

Acts 13:38 *“Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you.”*

Acts 26:18 *‘To open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me [Christ Jesus].’*

Eph 1:7 *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace. □*

II. *Mathew 01:12 The Purpose of Temptation*

Temptation is used by the Spirit. The words “sent Him” (*ekballei*) mean to thrust, to cast forth, to drive forth, to force. Jesus is compelled with great force to go into the desert or wilderness. He was driven by the Spirit to be tried. He was to be tried and tested *not to make Him fall*, but to make Him stronger and better prepared to do great things for God.

Thought 1. Trials and temptations are to be stepping stones, not stumbling blocks. They are opportunities for the Spirit of God to use in making us *stronger and more able* to do greater things for God.

Rom 5:4 *Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.*

James 1:2-5 *Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.*

2 Cor 4:17 *For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.*

2 Cor 12:8-10 *Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

1 Pet 1:7 *These have come so that your faith — of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire — may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed.*

1 Pet 4:12-13 *Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.*

Rev 2:3 *You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.*

Thought 2. After a significant decision or a mountaintop experience, it is very wise to get alone with God. One must be spiritually strengthened and prepared to follow through with the new decision.

Heb 10:22 *Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.*

Psa 145:18 *The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.*

Psa 34:18 *The Lord is close to the broken — hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.*

Psa 73:28 *But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign Lord my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds.*

III. **Mark 01:13** *Temptation, a Wilderness Experience*

Temptation is a desert or wilderness experience, it is a discomfoting, apprehensive and threatening experience. Jesus faced all three experiences in His desert or wilderness temptation. (See Mt. 4:2-4; 4:5-7; 4:8-10 *Jesus' temptation.*)

- ⇒ He was discomfoted in that His peace and security in God were disturbed. He was made immediately aware of another choice, a choice that aroused His flesh to desire the forbidden thing: bread created from rocks. Christ was tempted to use His own power to meet both a personal and a worldwide need: hunger. He was hungry, and His hunger was critical. He had not eaten for forty days. The devil tempted Him to create bread to feed Himself, and in this suggestion was the hidden idea that He could feed the world, proving Himself to be the Son of God. By such, He could secure what He was after: the loyalty and worship of men. He was tempted to trust Himself, not God.
- ⇒ He was apprehensive in that He was made immediately aware that a decision must be made, a decision that could be wrong and could result in bad consequences.
- ⇒ He was threatened in that if He yielded to the temptation, the consequences of sin would result and God's purpose would not be fulfilled.

Thought 1. Temptation is a desert or wilderness experience, that is, a worldly experience. Temptation is of the desert or wilderness and comes from the desert or wilderness. Temptation is not civilized, comforting, peaceful, secure or safe. Note three things about the desert or wilderness (world).

- 1) The life of the desert or wilderness...
 - is covered with rocks and precipices (difficult, threatening situations) which can trip and injure.
 - is often a desert (dry, empty, purposeless) in which a person can die from thirst and hunger.
 - is camouflaged with serpents (food and drink, worldly deceptions) which will strike and poison.
 - is filled with ravenous beasts (both people and things, whether friend or foe) which will consume.
- 2) The danger of the desert or wilderness is that rocks, desert, serpents or animals will injure and consume us.
- 3) The call of the desert or wilderness is adventuresome, stimulating, challenging and exciting. It appeals to the *nature of man*.

Mat 16:26 “What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?”

Rom 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.

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. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

James 4:4 You adulterous people, don’t you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

1 John 2:15-16 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world — the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world.

Thought 2. God wills us to conquer the wild, to triumph over the desert or wilderness experience, but His presence and power are needed to conquer and triumph. Note that God sent Jesus into the desert or wilderness only after the Spirit had come upon Him.

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.

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

2 Pet 2:9 If this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.

IV. Mark 01:13 Temptation is of Satan

Temptation is of Satan; it is not of God (See *Temptation*, Lk. 04:01-02; *Satan*, Rev. 12:9)

Thought 1. So few people know and accept that temptation is of Satan. But the fact remains that temptation is a lie and a deception. It comes from the father of lies and deception. We must, therefore, reject temptation, for temptation kills a person eternally.

Mat 13:19 “When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path.”

John 8:44 “You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

John 13:2 *The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus.*

Eph 2:2 *In which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.*

1 Pet 5:8 *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy, the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*

V. **Mark 01:13** *Overcoming Temptation*

Temptation is met by God's help. This is seen in three experiences of Jesus.

1. He was with the wild animals of the desert or wilderness, yet they did not devour Him. The animals of the desert or wilderness would have included the leopard, lion, bear, wild boar, jackal, scorpions and serpents. God protected Jesus from all these for forty days.
2. He was ministered to by angels. Jesus did not have to face the temptations alone. God saw to it that He had whatever provision was necessary.

Rom 8:31 *What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?*

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

James 1:2-5 *Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.*

James 4:7 *Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

1 John 4:4 *You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.*

3. He relied upon God's Word to answer the temptations (See, *The Temptation of Jesus Christ*, Mt. 4:1-11; *Temptation*, Lk. 04:01-02; *God's Way: Faith, not Proof*, Mt. 4:1-11).

Thought 1. The armour of God is the glorious provision God provides for the believer's victory over temptation. ■

REVELATION 12:09 SATAN

*The great dragon was hurled down — that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. **Revelation 12:09***

Satan is called “the great dragon...that ancient serpent.” His name is Lucifer. He was probably one of the highest angels ever created by God, but he fell because of selfishness and pride (Isa. 14:12; cp. 1 Tim. 3:6; Rev. 12:3-4; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; 1 Pet. 5:8.). He is “an angel of light” with such deceptive and seductive power that even some ministers follow him, ministers who “masquerade as servants of righteousness” (2 Cor. 11:14-15). Throughout Scripture Satan is described as follows:

1. He is “the god of this world” who blinds men’s minds (2 Cor. 4:4).
2. He is “the prince of this world” (Jn. 12:31; 14:20; 16:11) and “the ruler of the kingdom of the air” (Eph. 2:2; 6:12).
3. He is Satan, which means the adversary (1 Chr. 21:1; Job 1:6; 2:1-6; Zec. 3:1; Mt. 4:10; Mk. 1:13; Lk. 4:8; Jn. 13:27; Acts 5:3; 26:18; Rom. 16:20).
4. He is the devil, which means the slanderer (Mt. 4:1, 5, 8, 11; Lk. 4:2-6, 13; 1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 20:2).
5. He is the deceiver of the whole world (2 Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9).
6. He is the tempter (Mt. 4:3; 1 Th. 3:5).
7. He is the evil one (Mt. 6:13; 13:19, 38).
8. He is the father of lies (Jn. 8:44).
9. He is the accuser of our brothers (Rev. 12:10).
10. He is a murderer (Jn. 8:44).
11. He is called Beelzebub (Mt. 12:24; Mk. 3:22; Lk. 11:15).
12. He is called Belial (2 Cor. 6:15).
13. He is called Abaddon (Rev. 9:11).
14. He is called the angel of the Abyss or bottomless pit (Rev. 9:11).
15. He is called Apollyon (Rev. 9:11).
16. He is called the enemy (Mt. 13:39).
17. He is called the gates of Hades (hell) (Mt. 16:18).
18. He is called an enormous red dragon (Rev. 12:3).
19. He is called a lying spirit (1 Kng. 22:22).
20. He is called that ancient serpent (Rev. 12:9; 20:2; cp. Gen. 3:4, 14; 2 Cor. 11:3).

21. He is called the dominion of darkness (Col. 1:13).
22. He called the prince of devils (Mt. 12:24).
23. He is called the ruler of this dark world (Eph. 6:12).
24. He is called the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient (Eph. 2:2).
25. He is called the evil spirit (Mt. 12:43).

Satan's purpose in making war against God is twofold.

1. Satan's purpose is power and worship, to receive as much of the power and worship of the universe as possible (Isa. 14:12-17; Ezk. 28:11-17). He goes about this in three ways.

=> He opposes and disturbs God's work in the world (Isa. 14:12-17; Ezk. 28:11-17; Job 1:6; 2:1-6; Mt. 4:10; Mk. 1:13; Lk. 4:8; Rev. 12:7-9).

=> He discourages believers through various strategies (Lk. 22:31; Eph. 6:10-12).

=> He arouses God's justice against people by leading people to sin and to deny and rebel against God. And when they do, God's justice has to act and judge people to the fate of their choice: that of living with Satan eternally (Mt. 12:25-26; Jn. 13:31-32).

2. Satan's purpose is to hurt and cut the heart of God. Why? Because God has judged and condemned him for rebelling against God. Therefore, Satan does all he can to get back at God. The best way he can do this is to turn the hearts of people away from God and lead them to sin and to follow the way of evil.

However, Christ has broken Satan's power by two acts (Jn. 12:31-32; 16:11; 8:44; Col. 2:15).

1. By never giving in to the devil's temptation (Mt. 4:1-11) and by never sinning (2 Cor. 5:21). Christ overcame sin. He was righteous: He was perfect.
2. By destroying the devil's power of death. Christ was not held by physical or spiritual death (Heb. 2:14-15). He arose and ascended to God's right hand.

It is for this reason that the Bible says "the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world" (1 Jn. 4:4); and again. "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31). ■