The Temptation of Christ
Selected Scriptures
90-84

As we turn to the book of Matthew tonight we are going to come to one of the most monumental portions of all of Scripture. Matthew 4:1-11 records for us the temptation of Jesus Christ. You will remember that Matthew in writing his gospel is concerned to present Jesus Christ as king, king of kings, the sovereign savior. And up to chapter four everything has focused on the kingliness of Christ. Matthew has given us the ancestry of the king, his royal genealogy. He has given us the arrival of the king; His virgin birth. He has given us his adoration of the king by the resident Persian kingmakers that we know as wise men. He has given us the attestation of the king by the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. He has introduced us to the announcer of the king, John the Baptist, His forerunner. And he has given to us the affirmation of the King in His baptism by the descending of the Holy Spirit and the words of the Father, "This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Three chapters focused on the kingliness of Jesus Christ.

But there is a second purpose in the gospel of Matthew, not only to show the king, to present the king but to demonstrate the rejection of the king. He came as a king but He was rejected as king and as we shall see at the close of this great gospel He was executed, dying on the cross. But in chapter four we see the first rejection, the first conflict, following all of that glorious presentation of Jesus Christ as God's true King, the Messiah, the Savior of the world. The battle begins to take place, the battle of rejection, the battle of hostility in chapter four. And here the first and most formidable foe of all none other than Satan engages himself in an assault on the incarnate Son of God.

Now this is very important to establish His credentials because currently in this time in which we live, since the fall of man, Satan rules the world. He is the god of this age, he is the current usurper king, he is the prince of power of the air, he is the ruler of darkness. And if Jesus Christ is indeed the true king He must demonstrate His power over the present monarch. Does Jesus Christ, who claims to be King, have a rival more powerful than He is? If that is true then he is not the Sovereign. Will He maintain his utter holy purity as God's pure King or can He be successfully led into sin and thus prove He is not God? And prove that He makes no rightful claim to be God's King. On the other hand if He triumphs over sin, if He triumphs over temptation, if He triumphs over the greatest assault of Satan then He really is holy, He really is Sovereign, Savior, King, and He really can rescue sinners from the kingdom of darkness ruled by Satan.

That's the question. Can He rescue sinners? Can He deliver them out of the clutches of the king of this world? Can He free them from the grasp of Satan? Can He save them from their sin? Can He show them the path of victory and the path of triumph? We need to know all of that if we are to acknowledge Him as God's true King and Savior.

So this assault is very essential to the King's credentials. But there is something more in this passage than just a look at the King's credentials as He engages in the battle with Satan. There are some very practical and personal lessons to be learned here that are gonna have a great impact on all our lives. Becuase in this passage we see how Jesus dealt with temptation and how He avoided

sin. And it gives to us a pattern that all of us can follow and triumph in our own temptations.

Every human being experiences the presence of temptation to do evil, the relentless temptation. It is the most common and the most natural reality in our lives to be tempted to do evil because we are inherently evil to begin with. All of us, the Bible says, are sinners; all of us sin continually as a result of being continually vulnerable to the relentlessness of temptation. Our flesh is weak and it longs to rebel against the laws of God. The world system which is our environment is made up of sinners and controlled by its prince Satan who uses the system to deceive us, the manipulate us into evil. And so we need to learn how to triumph. We need first of all a savior who can deliver us from this relentless sinning. We need one who can show us the path of triumph in our own temptations. And we meet Him right here in Matthew 4.

So that this account of Jesus triumph over the attack of Satan will show us Christ's power of his arch enemy, the devil, thus establishing Himself as the true Sovereign King. It will prove that He is stronger than the devil and therefore has the power to rescue sinners from the kingdom of darkness; it will prove that He is sinless and thus has a right to be our Holy Redeemer and it will also show the practical path to triumph in temptation. And so I say it's a monumental portion of Scripture.

Let's look at it just in three ways: first of all the preparation for the temptation, then the temptation and then the triumph. Let's begin at verse 1, "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after He had fasted 40 days and 40 nights He then became hungry and the tempter came." That indicates the preparation. Now remember this, Satan is the arch enemy of Jesus Christ. He has fought Jesus Christ ever since he was cast out of heaven. He will fight Him right down to the very end when he is cast into the Lake of Fire that burns forever and ever, prepared for the devil and his angels. All the way along since he was first thrown out of heaven. He has done everything possible within his power to destroy the work of Christ. He has tried to destroy the Messianic line, he has tried to have God pronounce a curse on it and therefore no one in that line could ever be the sin bearer, the holy one. When Jesus was born he tried to slaughter all the babies and thus kill the Messiah before He ever got started. And here when He begins His ministry he immediately goes after Him, to assault Him, at the beginning of His public ministry. He comes back at the end of His ministry, just before the cross as Jesus is in the garden and all the horror of what He anticipates at the cross comes sweeping over Him like a temptation, a temptation to run from it.

And so we are seeing here the first major assault on Christ as He begins His ministry but not the last. And listen, between the first one and the last one in the garden, relentlessly Satan was trying to tempt Him all the way through His ministry. But would you please notice something, verse 1 says that Jesus was led up not by the devil but by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil. The Holy Spirit wanted this test to happen. The Holy Spirit wanted this encounter to take place to prove Christ's holiness, that He would not fall to sin and to prove His power over His arch enemy. So the Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. The wilderness, George Adam Smith, says it is called the Devastation. It is actually a very frightening area east of Jerusalem, down the back slope of the plateau on which Jerusalem rises over a mile above the Dead Sea. And in that place called the Devastation is nothing but bareness and rocks and jagged cliffs; it is a dangerous place. The Old Testament called it Jeshumon, Devastation. Today a rugged road winding up, a back road from Jericho to Jerusalem will take you right through that area and it is a frightening trip.

In that wilderness Jesus would be all alone. No one would be there with Him. No one would be there to help Him in His temptation. He had to demonstrate His power by Himself. The place was

dangerous. Being alone for most would be dangerous. Additionally it tells us in verse 2 that He had fasted 40 days and 40 nights and so His circumstances were dangerous. Though during that period no doubt He had been praying and meditating, He had been preparing for the battle and preparing for His ministry. In spite of all the spiritual exercise over 40 days and 40 nights there would be tremendous weakness in His physical body. He would be uncomfortable in the bareness of that place, the heat, the loneliness, He would be wary, He would be hungry and He would be vulnerable.

But not only was the place dangerous and not only was the circumstance dangerous but the tempter was dangerous too. It says He was tempted by the devil, verse 3, the tempter came. The devil, the prince of this world he is called, the prince of the power of the air, the god of this age, the prince of demons, Lucifer, the serpent, the great dragon, the evil one, destroyer, tempter, deceiver, the spirit that works in sons of disobedience, the most wicked being that exists in the entire universe, the cleverest and the most subtle and the greatest deceiver. The most crafty sinful being in the universe is the tempter. Everything about this scenario is dangerous. And furthermore the approach is dangerous because Satan knows Him so well. There was a time when he, as Lucifer, lived in the glory of God's presence in heaven. And he has dogged the steps of the Son of God ever since he was thrown out of there. He knows every detail about His life; Satan is an exceptionally accurate theologian. And his temptation, believe me, would be masterfully designed to attack the Lord Jesus Christ with the greatest amount of impact.

So Matthew, in just a few words, helps us to understand the danger of the situation by giving us a look at the preparation. But let's go beyond the preparation and move to the temptation. When Satan comes to Him he comes in three waves of temptation. Let's look at the first. Verse 3, "The tempter came and said to Him, 'If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.'" Would you notice that Satan begins with the word 'if'? Always planting the doubt. Always wanting to force the proof. So he tempted Eve. Did God really say that, he asked her. And so he will always tempt. If he can create doubt about God, doubt about spiritual reality, doubt about the standards of the authority figure that is involved in our lives, namely God, doubt about what He commands, doubt about His law, then he can lessen the concern of the one being tempted. So he tempts with evil whispers, breathing doubts into our souls, doubts about the truth of God's revelation, doubts about God's power, doubts about God's love, doubts about God's care, doubts about God's omnisions, maybe He won't even know, doubts about our conversion, if you are a child of God, he might ask. He suggests again and again that terrible if, harassing our soul with fears and awful perplexities.

He knew Jesus was God's Son. He didn't say if You are the Son of God because he didn't know; he knew exactly who Jesus was and he knew He was God's Son. But Satan always likes to start by planting the seed of doubt. And if you can doubt your relationship to God and if you begin to question your relationship to God then maybe you'll act as if you had none. And then comes the temptation itself, very simple, "command that these stones become bread." Satan knew Jesus could do it. And that's how it is with Satan; he likes to tempt us in the realm of possibility no the impossibility. What good would that do? He tempts us with that which is readily available to us. And he tempted Jesus to turn stones into bread because Jesus could do that. and Jesus hadn't eaten in 40 days and He was hungry and food would be for Him at that moment a great satisfaction, a great source of strength and a great enjoyment.

But it was not just a temptation of the physical body or that would have been a temptation to eat greedily or in excess. It isn't a temptation is it to eat bread? It wouldn't even be a sin to make stones into bread if you could do that. it's not sinful to do that. There's nothing sinful about bread. There's

nothing sinful about exercising divine power to create. There's no sin in the eating unless there was some temptation to eat greedily as I said or in excess. No. Satan's suggestion might have been worded like this, "Has God said to you that you are My Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased? Hasn't God said that to you? And if you are the Son of God and if you are well pleasing to God and if you are the Sovereign King of the universe then why would God not give you food? Why would He starve You in the wilderness? I mean is God really telling you the truth when He says this is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased? If God is really well pleased then why are You in this terrible place in hunger? Why should You, the Son of God, why should You, the King of Glory, why should You the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Sovereign Savior, why should You the anointed one, the Christ, the Messiah, why should You be hungry? It's beneath Your dignity. It's beneath Your right. Didn't God even give Manna to unbelieving Jews in the wilderness? Didn't God say I will rain bread from heaven for you and didn't God in the Old Testament say I have never seen the righteous begging bread? And didn't Isaiah say they shall not hunger or thirst? If God cares about You like You think He does why are You in this situation? God fed His people by frequent miracles in the wilderness, why not You? can't You, His Son, work one miracle just for one meal? It seems of little consequence.

"And by the way, what's gonna happen if You die here? What's gonna become of God's plan for the Messiah if You perish here? And there's no food around here and You're very hungry and where are You gonna get it if you don't make it?"

You see, the point of temptation is not in feeing His hunger; the point of temptation is in distrusting His Father. that's the point of temptation. What he is saying to Him is it is incompatible for the Son of God to suffer. It isn't right. Sweep aside every human want by a divine act. It was a temptation to exercise personal, selfish authority to do what would satisfy His own desires. You were born in a stable but you're the Son of God. You were hurried off to Egypt for fear of Herod's wrath but You are the Son of God. You were raised in the obscurity of a carpenter's shop and there was a carpenter's roof that supplied You with a home. And in that despicable town of Galilee You spent 30 years of Your life as a nobody but You are the Son of God. And the voice of God from heaven is proclaiming that in Your ears and You have suffered enough and You have endured enough and You have had enough indignity; if You really are the Son of God grab some satisfaction You're entitled to it.

Why would God let You linger for weeks in this desert wandering among wild beasts, craggy rocks, un-honored, unattended, un-pitied and about to starve? You know what he's saying to Him? Rebel. Rebel. Take this deal into your own hands. Now Satan knew a lot about that, didn't he? He invented it, rebellion. It is a wicked attempt to cause the last Adam to fail the same way Satan failed and the same way the first Adam failed. How did the first Adam fail? By disobedience, by rebellion. God said don't and they said we don't care what You said we will. And that's how Satan comes first of all; doubt God, grab satisfaction, you deserve it, rebel, disobey. And he was attempting to destroy the Son's confidence in the Father's will and the Father's power and the Father's plan to sustain Him.

And again there is no sin in satisfying your hunger. Later in fact Jesus would feed the 5,000 and the 12 and He would do it again feeding a huge multitude of thousands. It's not wrong to create the food. He created food on at least a couple of occasions. What was wrong was to go against God and grab the control. That is precisely the issue. Forget God; do want you want for your sake. That's the temptation. To succumb to that temptation would be to disobey, show distrust and rebel against God but Jesus said, "Lo, I come oh Lord to do Your will." Would He violate that? Even in the garden of Gethsemane,at the end of His life Satan comes right back to Him as we noted and he tempts Him to

turn from the cross; rebel, don't go there. And He's sweating great drops of blood as His capillaries explode and blood mixes with sweat in the agony of that moment. But in the agony of that temptation He says resolutely, "Not My will but Thine be done."

Look at verse 4, "But Jesus spoke and He spoke to the adversary and it says but he answered and said, 'It is written. Man shall not live on bread alone but on every word that precedes out of the mouth of God.'" By the way He is directly quoting Deuteronomy 8:3. And you know what that text is in Deuteronomy 8:3? It is a reminder to Israel of God's tender care for His people during their wilderness wanderings. It's a perfect parallel. They're in the wandering wilderness, they were reminded not to grab their own satisfaction but to trust God that life consisted not in bread alone but every word that comes from the mouth of God.

We can paraphrase Jesus' answer like this, Satan you're preceding on the false assumption that for a man in order to appease hunger and stay alive bread is absolutely necessary. That's what you're assuming. You're assuming that out here in this wilderness if I don't make bread I'll die. But over against that erroneous assumption I now declare to you that it is not bread but it is the creative, energizing, sustaining power of My Father that is the source of My life. And if God wants to keep me alive He'll keep Me alive without any bread because man does not live on bread alone. But he lives by every word coming out of the mouth of God. Jesus then is affirming His absolute confidence in the Father's promise, in the Father's pledge, in the Father's care. Jesus knows that God wills that He live. And He leaves the sustenance to Him. That's the principle that must rule our lives. Trust in God. God will not fail Me, He said. God will not forsake Me, God will wait on Me in His time, until His time I will wait on Him, I will trust Him. God is the source of My life. I will not control My own life, I will not grab My own satisfaction, I will not instantaneously and rebelliously fulfill My own desires, I wait for God. He loves Me, He cares for Me, He meets My need in His own time, in His own way.

The governing motive and the governing principle of His life was to do the will of God and leave the sustenance to Him. It's kind of like this, seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and, Matthew 6, "all these things shall be," what? "Added unto you." You take care of the righteousness; God will take care of the bread. God will take care of the sustenance. I trust God. I trust God. I don't need to rebel. I don't need to disobey. I don't need to revolt. I will wait on the Lord. I don't rush to satisfy my own fleshly needs.

Well, Satan listens to that. He's very subtle. So he moves to a second temptation. So, you trust God do You? Well, You trust God. You're gonna commit Yourself to God. God's gonna take care of You. God can do it all. Is that right? Verse 5, here comes the second temptation, "The devil took Him into the Holy City," and by the way both of them are supernatural creatures so this was not a problem. They were instantly together, moved to the holy city, Jerusalem. And had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple. Herod had a royal portico, when the southern wall of the temple mount. In one corner, the southeast corner of that, which overlooked the Kedron Valley, was 450 feet high. A dizzy height as Josephus points out. And if you were standing on the corner of the top of Herod's portico on the temple mount you would be looking straight down 450 feet. By the way, tradition says James, our Lord's brother, was thrown off that. And that's how he was killed.

You say You trust God, do You? Well then You certainly believe that God's gonna take care of You no matter what. If You will not prove your Messiahship by working a miracle to save Yourself then why not just do something that will force God to save You? Don't do it Yourself. You want to be humble about this? You want to trust God? You wanna wait on God? Then fine, just do this. Verse 6,

and again the if, "If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down. And then You'll find out whether God cares for You. For it is written. And here's the devil quoting Scripture, Psalm 91. Psalm 91:11-12 says, "He'll give His angels charge concerning You, spoken of the Messiah, in their hands they will bear You up lest You strike Your foot against a stone." He says you know Jesus, Psalm 91 says that the angels are gonna protect the Messiah. That God's gonna make sure His angels are in charge of You, they're gonna life You up, that's what bear you up means, and never even let You strike Your foot on a stone let alone crush Your whole body at the bottom of this parapet.

So if You trust God why don't You let God prove Himself? You say You can trust Him then put Him to the test. Now the first temptation was to do it Himself against God's will and now the temptation is to do it in a way that God will show Himself and perform a miracle. And God would be doing this and that eliminates the problem in the first temptation. Let God do it. So subtle.

But you see this is even worse because this is the sin of presuming on God. This is the sin of testing God. In the first a peril really existed, hunger. The hunger was real. Here Jesus is asked to create a peril and then presume on God to deliver Him from it. This is sin. The Psalm is prayed Lord keep Me from presumptuous sin; those things that I get into and I get so deep and then I presume you're gonna get me out of there. But Jesus won't do it. Verse 7 His response, and again he quotes from Deuteronomy this time 6:16, "Jesus said to him, 'On the other hand it is written you shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Oooh, don't you dare test God.

This would be a prodigious sign admittedly. I mean a swan dive off the corner of the temple in full view of everybody and a nice soft landing. And then a declaration: I am the Messiah. Do you believe it now? Could be relatively convincing. In fact even against the will of the people, even with the hostility and hatred of the priests this would be really hard not to accept. And by the way hadn't Malachi said, "The Lord whom you seek shall suddenly come to His temple,"?

You know there were several false messiahs who actually tried this. They had very brief careers. One named Thudus led the people out and he was going to prove he was the messiah by splitting the waters of the Jordan River. It didn't happen and he was done. There was another one who was famous Egyptian pretender. Noted in Acts 21:38 and he promised with one word that he would lay flat all the walls of Jerusalem. You know frankly it's helpful when false messiahs attempt such prodigious feats because it makes it fairly clear that they are in fact false. Simon Magus was one who actually tried to fly through the air unsuccessfully and it ended his life. All these pretenders had all thought that if they were able to do some astounding magic, some sensation they could capture public acceptance. Why wouldn't Jesus wanna do that? is this what He wanted? So many times they came to Him and said we wanna sign, we wanna sign, do a trick, do a miracle and He would never do it when they asked. He came not for popularity; He came to be rejected. He came to be hated and despised and killed. He came, Isaiah 53 says, "As a suffering servant". He came to be mistreated. He came to be hated. He came to die. And if all of a sudden the whole populous saw Him do some astounding miracle like that and crowned Him king and He bypassed the cross all would have been lost. He had to be pierced through for our transgressions. He had to be crushed for our inequities. He had to be chastened for our well being. He had to be scourged for our healing. he had to be oppressed and afflicted. He had to be a lamb led to slaughter. He had to be oppressed and taken to judgment. He had to be cutoff out of the land of the living. Please the Lord. Isaiah 57:10, "to crush Him; putting Him to grief. It pleased the Lord. Jesus came to die, the Son of Man comes not to be ministered unto but to minister and give His life of ransom for many."

Had he fallen to this temptation and sinned and maybe He would have bypassed the plan. God never intended for this to happen. He intended for Jesus to be rejected as the Messiah. He came unto His own and His own received him not. "He was in the world, the world was made my Him and the world knew Him not." He knew that if you attract men by providing them with sensations you've adopted a way in which there is no future. And the reason is simple; to retain His power and to retain their interest He would have to produce greater and greater and greater sensations because this year's sensation is next year's commonplace. And He would have had lovers of sensation and not lovers of God. and He would have had people who wanted to follow Him for his power not who wanted to come to Him in repentance and receive His forgiveness. He had a taste of that in John 6 when He fed the multitude on one side of Galilee. The next day He was on the other and they all came back and He said, "You seek Me because of the food."

You don't use God's power to test God. there is no sense in seeing how far you can go with God. there's no sense in putting yourself deliberately into a threatening situation, doing it recklessly and needlessly and then expecting God to rescue you from it. God expects His own, especially His Son, to take some risks in being true to Him but He doesn't expect Him to take risks in order to enhance His own prestige. Jesus refused the way of sensation. It was the way to failure not the way to true success. He refused to collect a crowd of thrill seekers. He wanted a crowd of repentant sinners.

He will trust the Father and He will not presume on Him. he is so humiliated in that wilderness. Forty days with nothing to eat, absolutely all alone, weary, hungry, dirty, tired. He looks like anything but a king but He will not distrust His Father and He will not take the road of sensation for His is the road of suffering.

Satan wasn't done. Rebuffed the second time he came back with a third temptation. You trust the Father do You? and You will only do His will, is that right? and You will only do His will His way? And You will not seek to prove Yourself for some means of sensation? Is that it? And now the subtleties sort of fades away. The devil drops the mask. He takes everything on in one final desperate attempt to achieve his goal. Verse 8-9, "Again the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, 'All these things I will give You if You fall down and worship me.'" Nothing subtle about that. All subtleties are gone now. He's desperate. He takes Him to a high mountain, gives Him a view of all the world's kingdoms, which belong to the usurper Satan for the time being. Egypt with its magnificent pyramids and wonderful buildings and treasures. Greece and Athens and Corinth with all their splendor, Rome, the mistress of the world and all the rest across the globe. And he says all these things will I give you if you fall down and worship me.

You say why is that a temptation. I'll tell you why it's a temptation because in the end He has a right to those, is that not true? You have a right to that. Psalm 2:8, "Ask of Me and I will give you the heathen for your inheritance and the outer most parts of the earth for your possession." That's the Messianic promise from God to the Messiah. I'm just offering you what God offers You only what I'm offering You is the same thing God offers You minus the cross. It really involves compromise, You could have it all and You could have it all without the cross, without the sin offering that You're gonna be, without the wrath of God. You can have it all just worship me.

And by the way, do you know that's what the devil says all the time. Go ahead, compromise. You know what you want, you know what your flesh desires and hey you deserve it. and all you have to do to get it is just worship me. By the way, all sin is an act of worship toward Satan, right. if you were

worshiping God you wouldn't do it. God says you shall not; Satan says take it, you deserve it. if you don't do it you've worshiped God; if you do it you've worshiped Satan. Worship me. You say that's a terrible thing. worship Satan, worship Satan. Boy I hear about cults. There are some kind of cults where they worship Satan. Listen folks, every time you sin you worship Satan. Every time you sin you bow to him. every time you sin you declare him your sovereign. Every time you sin you do his will. Every time you sin he's calling the shots. Instead of one long bitter road to the throne just one short bow and the crown is Yours. You can rule it at once and You deserve it; no shame, no agony. Don't put Your demands so high Jesus. Wink a little at evil and questionable things. Retreat a little bit from this unnecessary passion for obedience. And why fight? Hey, You can have me for an ally says Satan. We'll do it together. This is what I'd like you to do and when you do it you become his ally.

I'll give You sovereignty over Israel. I'll give You sovereignty over the nations without the cross. You know what? If Christ had done that it would have been Christ playing the role of antichrist because Christ would have become Satan's world ruler. It would have been Christ becoming the beast. No, once more from our Lord comes a swift and decisive answer out of the book of Deuteronomy and again He responds, verse 10, then Jesus said to him get out of here Satan. And it wasn't a suggestion. It was a command. "For it is written you shall worship your Lord God and serve Him only." There aren't any shortcuts to blessing. There aren't any shortcuts to achievement. Satan comes at us like this insisting that the end justifies the means. He suggests that in a world of commerce, in a world of society, in a world of politics we must be somebody and the only way to be somebody in this world is to compromise. Let's get in the world and take it on His terms. If you really wanna be a winner you gotta compromise a little. But for Christ the issue was clearly drawn; submission to Satan and an easy path to popularity and temporary power was disloyalty to God. We have the same choice, beloved. We either have unswerving loyalty to the Cross or we compromise.

What have we learned from these temptations? Satan will tempt us to distrust the care of God. He will tempt us to distrust the love of God. He will tempt us to distrust the will of God, the way of God, the purpose of God, the concern of God, the compassion of God. he doesn't want us to believe God when God says He'll supply all our needs according to His riches by Christ Jesus. He doesn't want us to believe that. he wants us to grab some satisfaction on our own. Secondly, Satan will tempt us to presume on God. to go out there and do what we think we need to do to make our splash in the world and expect God to rescue us or put the pieces back together.

I talked to a man who said to me I'm gonna divorce my wife. I said why. He said I don't like her. He said I don't like her at all. In fact he said I can't stand her; I hate her. I said that's not grounds for divorce in the Bible. You're a Christian. Is she a Christian? Yes, she's a Christian. He said what do you think God will do to me if I divorce her without any biblical grounds. I said I don't know. I said I don't know what he'll do to you specifically; he will have every right to chasten you. and I'm sure there will be some chastening and I'm not sure what God will choose to do and He will even have the right to take your life as one who sinned flagrantly and knowingly. He said you know what, I don't wanna live with this woman; I'll take my chances with God. And he divorced her. I wouldn't want to do that. I'd rather take my chances with that woman since she may be a formidable person to cope with but she's not the judge of the universe. What presumption. I'll take my chances with God. like I'll jump; he'll catch me.

Satan will tempt us to distrust God, he'll tempt us to presume on God and do whatever we want and just expect God to pick up the pieces. And thirdly he'll tempt us to ambition to fulfill our ambition in our own way. That's how he works. Verse John 2 says, "He comes through the lust of the eyes, the

lust of the flesh, the pride of life to tempt us." How do we deal wit that? How did Jesus deal with it? Three times what did He do? Quoted what? Scripture. What did ____ say? "Thy word if I hid in my heart that I might not sin. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as babes desire the pure milk of the word that you may grow there by." It is the word that gives us victory. I've often said in my life that I spend so much time in the Scriptures and God knows I must need that. I can't even get started in a sin without hearing Bible versus in my mind. Thou shall not, thou shall not, thou shall not. Why are you doing that, you know what it says over there, you know what it says over there. I thank God my computer is jammed with that stuff.

And it isn't just that it's some kind of a sky hook it's that the Scripture has given me a comprehension of how to live and I know better than to purposely do that because I'll cut myself off from God's blessing. I don't wanna do that. it's not just that Scripture is a little sky hook that yanks you up and out it is that Scripture repeatedly poured into your life lays a foundation of comprehension and you know how you ought to live for maximum blessing.

Let's look at the triumph, finally. Jesus said to him be gone Satan. Get out of here. Holy indignation. And He vanquished him and then He quotes Deuteronomy 6:13, "He is defeated. He is sent away. He is not destroyed yet. His head will be bruised at the cross and at the end of the millennium kingdom he will be cast into the lake of fire that will burn for ever and ever but he is defeated right at the cross." Destroyed potentially there and here he is defeated in this initial temptation. The temptation to adopt a selfish, spectacular, presumptuous, secular messiahship and even a satanic messiahship was foiled and Jesus passed the test. He is more powerful than Satan. He is sinless. And He can rescue sinners from the kingdom of darkness. He is in charge of the devil. That's what he proved. He will not sin under the most subtle and vicious temptation under the most dangerous circumstance. He is the perfect man. He is the sovereign king. He is the ruler of Satan. He can rescue sinners from the domain of darkness. He is indeed the king. Not only is He the king by genealogy, not only is He the king by birth, not only is He the king by adoration, not only is He the king by attestation of Old Testament prophecy, not only is He affirmed the king by the forerunner John the Baptist, not only is He the king by virtue by His baptism and the spirit coming upon Him in the declaration from the Father in heaven but He is the king by virtue of His power over the current ruling monarch, Satan. And He shows His blazing power and the Father attests to His triumph in verse 11. The devil left Him, didn't have a choice because the King told him to leave. And behold angles came and began to minister to Him. Who sent the angels? God the Father. They were there at His birth, they predicted it, they announced it. They were there through His earthly life protecting Him. They warned His family to leave when He was just a little guy. Even at the cross He could have called 12 legions of them if He wanted to and they would have delivered Him. they were there at His resurrection sitting right there on either end of the slab and the announced that He was alive and they will be there when He comes again. For He comes with His angels and here they are again sent by the Father to minister to Him.

What do you think that means? Food. Some kind of manna. Water. Strength. Comfort. Fellowship. And God was saying this is My king. This is My King and the angels recognize Him and the angels serve His every purpose. He is the sovereign. Over the holy angels and the demons. And He has proven the ability to take you out of the kingdom of darkness ruled by Satan and bring you to the kingdom of light. Through the forgiveness of sin, through His death and resurrection in your behalf.

Let's bow together in prayer. Our Father we pray tonight that the truth may sink deeply into our hearts. This is the King. Oh how glorious. This is the one that has defeated the arch enemy of the

universe, Satan, for Himself and all who come to Him in faith. And Father I pray that those who hear this great message, this great truth will come to the true king, confess Him as their king, repent their sin and follow Him. that they might be transferred out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. That they might have the hope of eternal glory in heaven which hope you give to all who believe in Your Son, the King. Who became a King through suffering and died for sinners.

Father we thank You for the gift of Your Son and our King, Jesus Christ in whose name we pray. Amen.

Available online at: http://www.gty.org

COPYRIGHT (C) 2016 Grace to You
You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (http://www.gty.org/connect/copyright).