

=BIBLE MOUNTAINS=

Lesson 3

The Mount of Temptation

INTRODUCTION: The Mount of Temptation is a high, lofty mountain near the city of Jericho. Jesus is starting His earthly ministry. He has just been baptized. Now Satan tempts Him. It is commonly known by all what these temptations were. First, Satan tempted Him to command that the stones be made bread. Matthew 4:3, “And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.”

Then, He was tempted to cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, trusting the angels to care for Him. Matthew 4:6, “And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.”

Thirdly, He was tempted to bow down and worship Satan, if Satan would give Him the kingdoms of the world and their glory. Matthew 4:8, 9, “Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.”

- I. THE SIN THAT SATAN WAS TEMPTING JESUS TO COMMIT. Of course, the yielding to the temptations themselves would have been sin, but the real sin that Satan was after for Jesus to commit was that of not pleasing the Heavenly Father and doing these things in the energy of the flesh, which would make them sin. Notice the following progression:
1. The purpose of man’s existence is to please God. Revelation 4:11, “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” Notice in this verse that all things (including man) were created for God’s pleasure, which means that our purpose on earth is to please God.

If this be the case, we need to diligently seek and find what pleases God.

2. It is faith that pleases God. Hebrews 11:6, “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Notice that it is faith that pleases God. Faith is a dependence upon God. In other words, God wants us to depend upon Him. Bear in mind that the purpose of our existence is to please God, and faith is what pleases God, and faith is dependence upon Him.
3. Anything done without faith is sin. Romans 14:23, “And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” Notice that anything that is done without faith is sin. In other words, if we do anything without depending upon God, it is sin.

Let’s review: The purpose of our existence is to please God. Faith, that is dependence, is what pleases God. Anything done without faith or not in faith or without depending upon God is sin. So that means whatever one does, whether it’s preach a sermon, sing a solo, teach a class, rear a family, clean a house, build a business, build a home, build a marriage, or whatever one does, if it is done without dependence upon God, it is sin.

That leads us to what Satan was trying to get Jesus to do. You see, Jesus pleased the Heavenly Father. Matthew 3:17, “And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Jesus did not seek to please Himself, but the Father. Romans 15:3, “For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.”

Jesus sought to do only those things which pleased the Father. John 8:29, “And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.”

So, since Jesus pleased the Father, that means He depended upon the Father, because that is what pleases God. And if Jesus had yielded to any of these temptations and performed these works in Himself, He could not please the Father. He would not have fulfilled His purpose on earth, and He would have sinned, because He would have done something not in faith. (Teacher, go through the activities of your students' daily or weekly schedule, and remind them that in everything they do, they are to depend upon God, and in any case when they do not depend upon God, it is sin.

- II. NOTICE THE WEAPON THAT JESUS USED. Matthew 4:4, "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Notice especially the words, "It is written."

Matthew 4:7, "Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Again notice the words, "It is written."

Matthew 4:10, "Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Again notice the words, "It is written." Jesus used the Word of God with which to combat the Devil. There is no other way. The only offensive weapon given in Ephesians 6 is the Sword of the Spirit. Ephesians 6:17, "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

Now notice Matthew 4:4, "...Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." In other words, we need every word. That means we have to have an every-word Bible. This every-word Bible has been preserved for us. Psalm 12:6, 7, "The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." Notice it does not say the Word of the Lord is preserved forever, but the words of the Lord are preserved forever. Somewhere there must be a book that contains the very words of God. This Book is the King James Bible, which has been preserved for us. If there is no such Bible, then we cannot resist the Devil, because it must be done according to Matthew 4:4, "...by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

CONCLUSION: Review carefully with the class, as follows:

1. The purpose of our creation was to please God.
2. It is faith that pleases God, and this faith is dependence upon God.
3. If we do anything without faith or dependence upon God, it is sin.
4. The Devil is constantly trying to get us (as he did Jesus) to do God's work in the energy of the flesh and not in the power of the Spirit with dependence upon God.
5. When he gets us to do this, we have sinned because we have done something without depending upon the Father.
6. The only way we can avoid this is by the Word of God. We fight him with the Word of God; we yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit and ask the Holy Spirit to work through us, throwing ourselves on the mercy of God in everything that we do. This is not only for spiritual matters but also for secular matters—work, home, school, play. In every area of our lives, we should please Him, which means we must depend upon Him; and if we don't, we sin.