

LESSONS FROM THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

Int.

1. Aim: To show some of the valuable lessons we can learn from a study of this event in the life of Jesus.
2. The temptation of Jesus.
 - a. Mt. 4:1-11
 - b. Also recorded in Mk.1:12-13 and Lk.4:1-13.
 - c. The actual place of the temptation has not been absolutely identified.
 - d. It was not a luxurious resort but a place of loneliness and hunger with implied danger of wild beasts - Mk.1:13 - Lions, wolves, leopards and serpents have been found in the Judaeen wilderness.
3. A study of these verses suggests some lessons we may learn.

Discussion

I. WE LEARN THAT SATAN IS NEVER FAR AWAY

- A. Mk.1:12-13 shows that the temptation immediately followed Jesus' baptism: "**And straightway the Spirit driveth him forth into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan...**"
 1. Matt.4:3 says "**and the tempter came...unto him.**"
 2. Jesus was not seeking temptation. Rather, he was driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted.
 3. Before He entered his ministry, he had to be put to the most severe test
 4. There had to be the test of strength between him (the friend of man) and the enemy of man.¹

B. No person is immune to temptation

1. If Jesus the Son of God was tempted then we also can expect temptation.
2. It is not a question of If but rather a matter of WHEN !
3. We do not have to run an advertisement for an opportunity to sin.
4. I Pet. 5:8 **"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."** On the prowl - hunting prey !

II. WE LEARN ABOUT JESUS AND FASTING

A. Jesus fasted 40 days and 40 nights

1. It is interesting to note that Moses also fasted 40 days and 40 nights when the law was given - Deut. 34:28
2. Elijah fasted the same period of time during the rampages of Jezebel - I Kings 19:8

B. Jesus condemned some fasting

1. Mt.6:16 **"...be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast."**
2. They fasted for attention - this was the wrong motive.
3. Fasts for improper motives were condemned in I sa. 58:3-7

C. Some fasting occurred in the early church:

1. Acts 13:2-3 - when serious decisions had to be made about mission work
2. Acts 14:23 - when they were appointing elders
3. I Cor. 7:5 when family relationships became burdensome and threatening
4. II Cor. 6:4-5 When intense persecution and tribulations had to be endured to serve God

D. Conclusions

1. Fasting was not commanded Christians as a continuing public duty but occurred naturally as dictated by personal burden and concern.
2. It is not wrong if it is not dictated as a required ritual, if it is sincere, if it is not publicized and done for show.
3. If it is not abusive to the body, and if it is followed by a practical renewal of daily routine.

III. WE LEARN THAT TEMPTATION IS NOT A SIN WITHIN ITSELF

- A. Jesus was tempted by the tempter yet we know he was without sin: because he "**was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.**" Heb. 4:15
 1. He did not yield to the temptation
 2. We are all tempted - as long as we do not yield to the temptation it is not sin.
 3. But the word tempt or temptation is used in 2 different ways:
- B. Sometimes the Bible says that God tempts man: - which means to prove, to test, try,
 1. Abraham was tempted - by God
 - a. Gen. 22:1
 - b. Heb. 11:17 "**By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac:...**"
 2. When it says that God tempts it simply means that in various ways God tested or proved his people to see whether they were really obedient to him.²
- C. But there are the other times when the Devil tempts man
 1. This word means: "Seeking to lead to do evil"
 2. In this sense God never "tempts" anyone. - Jas. 1:13

3. The devil was tempting Jesus - trying to get Him to rebel against God.
4. "However when the devil presents various inducements to persuade a person to act in rebellion to the will of God, the person is said to be tempted, even if he completely rejects the devil's inducement."³
5. Jas. 1:12 **"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."**
6. I Pet. 1:7 **"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:"**

- D. The Christian should not be surprised at temptation. Satan tempted Christ; he will have no reluctance to tempt his disciples: **"the servant is not greater than his lord."**
Jn. 15:20

IV. WE LEARN THE METHODS SATAN USES IN TEMPTING US

A. There is the lust of the flesh

1. To a hungry Jesus, he challenged with the fleshly satisfaction bread could bring.
2. It is the same with us.

B. There is the pride of life.

1. With a sarcastic "IF" Satan challenged Jesus to parade His Deity by casting himself down so angels would rescue Him.
2. Is that not the same avenue Satan uses on us?

C. **There is the lust of the eye.**

1. Satan showed Jesus all the power the eye could see --all the kingdoms of the world and offered all to Him if He would compromise and throw in with him.
2. Do we not have the same temptation today? Give up your stands of right and wrong and compromise convictions to be like the world.

D. I Jn. 2:15-16 The same avenues of approach are used by Satan today. Those who are fooled by them have the same fearful destiny: "...**the world passeth away, and the lust thereof.**"

V. WE LEARN THE METHOD BY WHICH ONE MAY BE VICTORIOUS OVER TEMPTATION

- A. In each of the instances where Satan tempted Jesus, He routed him by saying, "It is written"---and then He quoted the word of God that applied
- B. In I Jn. 2:15-16 we find the same workable plan to overcome the love of the world in v. 17: "**And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.**"
- C. The more we are saturated with the Word of God, the stronger our defense:
 1. Eph. 6:10-18
 2. II Tim. 2:15
 3. Ps. 119:11 I Jn. 3:9

VI. WE LEARN THAT VICTORY OVER TEMPTATION BRINGS SWEET BENEFITS

- A. Jesus stood firm. The devil left and the "**angels came and ministered unto him.**" - Matt.4:11
- B. We are not promised miraculous divine intervention, but we are given the promise of Heb. 2:18 "**For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.**"
- C. Reward of victory over temptation:
1. Works patience - Jas. 1:3
 2. We are blessed - Jas. 1:12
 3. Counted happy - Jas.5:11
 4. Established as children of God - Heb. 11:5-6
 5. We may enjoy a clear conscience - I Pet. 2:19

Conclusion

1. There is something about a tested but victorious Savior that draws us to Him.
 - a. He was one of us and yet did not sin as we do.
 - b. He can sympathize with our humanity while showing us how to conquer it.
2. Temptation is no respecter of persons - all are tempted.
3. But no degree of temptation justifies any degree of sin !
4. We can overcome Satan by our acceptance of the Christ who defeated him.
5. Will you Obey now?

1. Annual Lesson Commentary - Jan. 21, 1973 p. 25 by Leslie G. Thomas

2. Annual Lesson Commentary Jan. 21, 1973 p. 23 by Leslie G. Thomas

3. ALC Jan. 21, 1973 p. 23

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