

Overcoming Temptation

PCOC

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Thesis: To equip Christians with the knowledge to overcome temptation.

Text: Matthew 4:1-11

Introduction:

A) We face temptation everyday of our lives.

- 1) At home, at work, at school, in our cars.
- 2) In the books that we read, on our televisions, from our friends and our enemies.

B) How we deal with these temptations will show our true character.

- 1) Some, when faced with temptation, simply give in to it.
 - a) Caring not that they have sinned.
 - b) Thinking, well, I have plenty of time to straighten out my life.
- 2) Friends, when our answer to sin is, "I know that it is wrong, but I'm going to do it anyone, because I just don't care" we need to seriously take a close look at our lives.
 - a) This is a sign of a severe heart problem.
 - b) If it were a physical heart problem we would immediately deal with it
 - c) But since its "only our spiritual lives" its ok to ignore the signs, right?

C) When faced with any problem a Christian should always turn to the Word of God.

- 1) This morning we will notice three points from the temptation of Christ, so that we can learn how we ought to deal with temptation.
 - a) Feed on the Word
 - b) Rightly divide the Word
 - c) God First, Me Last
- 2) We begin our sermon this morning in Matthew 4:1...

Discussion:

I) Step #1 – Feed on the Word.

A) Satan tries to tempt Christ for the first time.

- 1) He tries to get Christ, who had been fasting for 40 days, to change some stones into bread.
- 2) This would be a great temptation for someone who had been fasting for 40 days to overcome.
 - a) But Christ didn't even hesitate.
 - b) 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.

B) Christ, our greatest example.

- 1) He overcame temptation by pointing out that the health of the spiritual man is more important than the physical.
- 2) We too can overcome temptation if we "Feed on the Word of God".
 - a) The Psalmist said, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." (Psalms 119:11)
 - b) Paul told the Philippians, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things". (Philippians 4:8)

C) "You are what you eat"

- 1) If I am studying God's Word then there will be no room for Satan.

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- 2) If I am always doing good things for others then there will be no time to do things that are not good.
- 3) But if I do nothing my heart will soon hunger and be filled with other things.
 - a) Proverbs 19:15 - Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.
 - b) Matthew 12:36 - But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.
- 4) So, we must decide what we will eat.

II) Step #2 – Rightly Divide the Word of Truth.

A) Satan tries to tempt Christ again.

- 1) He takes Christ to the holy city and placed Him on the pinnacle of the temple.
- 2) Then Satan does something out of the ordinary.
 - a) He mutilates Psalm 91:11ff.
 - b) He takes a verse that refers to God's children who walk in His paths and places it solely on Christ.
- 3) But once again Christ does not hesitate.
 - a) Matthew 4:7 - Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.
 - b) Christ knew the Scriptures better than anyone, and he knew that Satan was misusing them.

B) Twisting the Scriptures is a sin.

- 1) Paul said that we must "2 Timothy 2:15 - Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."
- 2) He also said, "Acts 20:27 - For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."
 - a) Paul understood the importance of preaching the Gospel in its entirety.
 - b) Galatians 1:6-9 - I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

C) "I Don't Twist Scriptures"

- 1) But do I do anything with them at all?
- 2) We are commanded to, "2 Timothy 4:2 - Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."
 - a) But I must first know the Scriptures.
 - b) And I cannot learn those Scriptures by leaving my Bible in the car all week, or on the coffee table to collect dust.
 - c) Friends, we need to wear out our Bibles because we study them so much.
- 3) How will we teach people what we don't know?

III) Step #3 – God First, Me Last.

A) Satan still doesn't give up.

- 1) This time he takes Jesus up to the top of a very high mountain and shows Him all of the kingdoms of the world.
- 2) He tells Christ that if He will bow down and worship Satan that He could have all of those kingdoms.
- 3) Once again, the unwavering Son of God doesn't hesitate with His answer.
 - a) 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.

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b) Christ never even considers Satan's offer, He simply answers with the Word of God.

B) Christ commanded the apostles to teach this principle.

- 1) Matthew 10:37-38 - He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.
- 2) He also told the rich young ruler that he would have to put God first in order to obtain salvation.
 - a) Luke 18:22 - Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.
 - b) But he loved his money too much.
 - c) He loved his money more than God.

C) Are My Priorities Straight?

- 1) We may say that God is first in our lives, but is He really?
- 2) Do I look forward to worshipping Him, to studying His Word?
 - a) I could say yes to these things, but do I really?
 - b) Do I come to every service?
 - c) Do I get there early so as not to miss anything?
 - d) Do I come to Bible classes?
- 3) Is God first in your life?

Conclusion:

A) "Then the devil leaveth". –Matt 4:11

- 1) James 4:7b – "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."
- 2) And that is exactly what happened there that day.

B) We have the ultimate example here for overcoming temptation.

- 1) Feed on the Word
- 2) Rightly Divide the Word
- 3) God First, Me Last

C) One principle fact we should always remember is that, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Philippians 4:13)

- 1) But I must be in the body of Christ to obtain that strength.
- 2) And You Can Be Added to the Body of Christ Today if You Will Obey the Gospel of Christ.
 - a) Hear, Believe, Repent, Confess, Be baptized.
 - b) If you have obeyed the gospel you must continue in it.
 - c) And if you have not continued in the teachings of Christ then you need to repent today! – 1John 1:9.