

### **104.23. THE TEMPTATIONS**

We all know temptation, as satan tries to get us to turn away from doing the right thing, every chance he gets, but we have the word of God to stand on, just as Jesus did when satan tried this with Him & this is our protection from evil, if we fully trust in it.

Right after Jesus was baptized, the heavens opened & God spoke, saying this is my beloved Son in who I am well pleased & the Holy Spirit descended like a dove down onto Jesus. This is the same powerful Holy Spirit that we receive, when we turn our life over to the God, by accepting Jesus as the redeemer of our lost soul, through His perfect sacrifice to pay for the sins of all who call on & believe in Him.

This was the start of Christ's earthly ministry & as proof that He would stay pure, to fight with & for us, He was led out & tempted & tested in the wilderness (desert), where He was alone with the wild animals, Mark 1:13 & satan came & gave all he had to try to tempt Jesus into prideful sin, but Jesus resisted, using God's spirit within Him & God's written Word of the Old Testament, to cast these temptations down. The significance of this is that Jesus remained sinless, so as to be able to be the perfect pure clean sacrifice, capable of paying for the sins of all mankind, through the shedding of sinless blood.

Jesus was fasting (refraining from food, or drink) in the desert, to avoid temporal distractions, as when fasting, you can spend your time in prayer, showing God & yourself, that He is more important than anything, but satan is clever & tempts us when we are hungry, angry, lonely, tired, or at a low point, or even a high point.

Jesus was tempted while hungry, but He was more hungry for God, than for food & after 40 days without eating, satan, the tempter came to Him & said, If you are the Son of God, turn these stones to bread, Matthew 4:1, satan, tried to place doubt in the mind of Jesus with the words, "If you are", which indicates that Satan was questioning whether or not Jesus was truly of God & Jesus answered, it is written, that man does not live on bread alone, but on every word from the mouth of God, Matt. 4:4. When Jesus said, It is written, He was referring to Deut. 8:3, when God humbled those in the wilderness, by providing manna from heaven, so Jesus made it clear that there are more important things, than our physical needs, which is our need to know God.

It's important to see how satan plants doubt, by whispering words into our ears & lives, trying to put our thoughts, above our faith, just as in the garden of Eden, when he asked Eve; Did God really say not to eat the fruit & to Jesus in the wilderness; if you are the Son of God & this is how he tries to make us doubt the truth & follow our thoughts, through simple whisperings of doubt.

Then satan took Jesus to the Holy city & had Him stand on the highest point of the temple & said, if you are the son of God, throw yourself down, as the Lord will command the angels to lift you up in their hands, Matthew 4:5. Here he tried to get Jesus to do something that would force God to help Him. This would be like us saying to God, I know that you can protect me, so I am going to jump in a raging river & I want you to keep me safe, like we are in authority over God, telling Him what we want Him to do, to prove Himself to us.

God is in authority over us & He owes us nothing, whereas we owe Him everything & we are not to ask Him to serve us & are warned about not

tempting Him with our unbelief; now we are to test & prove His words for truth, but we do not test or doubt His Holy authority or ability.

Here we see that even satan knows all scripture, as he quoted this biblical verse to Jesus, the Lord will command His angels to take good care of you, they will lift you up in their hands, which is from Psalm 91:11. So don't ever believe that you cannot be fooled, by not proving what your taught in regards to God's word, as the demons know the Word well & know how to twist it just enough to make it sound good & to lead you into good sounding beliefs, instead of God's truths.

God can & does protect His children, when we follow Him as He commands, but we are to use good judgment in testing & not to experiment with, or to tempt God. Satan was challenging Jesus & Jesus answered him with, it is also written, do not put the Lord your God to the test, Matthew 4:7, as again, though we are to test the things of God, we are not to test God, or His patience, though most of us fall short here. Now satan took Jesus to a very high mountain & showed Him all the kingdoms of the world & said if You bow down & worship me, I will give You all of this, which satan did have rule over, as Adam had lost his dominion over earth, when sin moved over him, as when you give in to sin, you in effect become a slave to that sin & relinquish all that you have to that sins master, who is satan.

So Jesus could have ruled the world without giving His life for us, but instead said depart from Me satan, as it is written, you are to only worship the Lord your God , Matt 4:8-10.

Satan's overwhelming greed for power, caused him to rebel against God, as he desired to be more than he was, whereas Jesus already had all power & glory, but willingly gave it all up to give His life for mankind.

Jesus took on the nature of a servant, who obeyed God completely unto death, as He kept His focus on eternal life, using God's words, which is like a sword, as it cuts straight through the evil plans of satan. So resist the devil, and he will flee from you, James 4:7.

Satan cannot read our minds, or private thoughts, but he knows men's desires & will do his best to tempt, trick & trap, every Jesus follower, 1 Peter 5:8. He is very clever. He knows all our weaknesses & he will always try to catch us off guard. Unlike Jesus, we are all born with a sin nature, Romans 5:12; 7:18, which is why without God's help, rebelling against Him is natural to us. Therefore, we must rely on God's power to resist the devil's snares. We tap into God's power by following Jesus' example. We all have access to the same devil-defeating tools that Jesus used.

Don't be fooled, good intentions will not defeat evil, only the divine tools of God will; His Word, prayer, & praise will work for defeating this deceitful evil enemy, as we have a high priest in Jesus, who knows we are weak & hurting & who knows how hard temptation can be.

#### PERSPECTIVES.

Satan really likes to jump in, to get us to sin, through judging others, on things that really don't matter & are not our business, though we nose in anyways, to put in our 2 cents, or to put someone down for something.

This should make us each ask, have we become stumbling blocks, in anyone's salvation? which Jesus chastises. I was standing in church one day, worshipping God, in my blue jeans, tee shirt, sandals & baseball cap & I asked God a serious question. I know that I come before & am accepted by God as I am, as even He walked the earth in meager garb,

when He could've been adorned in priestly garb & been more acceptable to the haughty, but I still needed to make sure of something, which some judgmental people make very controversial, the baseball cap. My hat has a patch that states that I am honored to serve an amazing God & I love for people to understand it, but could it be a stumbling block to another, who judges others by what they wear in church? The Lord does not look at what people look at, like the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart, 1 Samuel 16:7.

People have gotten good at making things important, that are not important to God & as such have become stumbling blocks to others, instead of the true disciples that God called them to be. A stone of stumbling & a rock of offense, for they stumble because they are disobedient to the Word, 1 Peter 2:8.

Some people get tempted to create legalistic deceptions, for judging others, such as believing that they are respecting God with what they wear, to make themselves look good & God never sees it, as He could care less what you have on your body, or how good you look to yourself, as it's what's in your heart & what comes out of a your mouth that defiles you, Matthew 15:17, not what you wear.

So, it isn't the one in rags; the one getting judged by man, that is the stumbling block, it is the one with the eyes & heart full of the self-imposed, religious legalistic judgements, playing God's advocate, by deciding what is appropriate, or not, for others that is sinning & is the true stumbling block.

Jesus said, do not judge lest you be judged, for in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you, Matthew 7:1.

So when the temptation to judge another, for any reason, whispers in your ear, you need to only remember what the heart of the one being served looks like to Jesus & not judge by what the heart of the ones doing the serving looks like, as the looks of others, is none of our business, as all business of the heart, is interdependent between God & the one serving & God & the one being served, without our personal input.