



The Temptation of Christ & The Word of God

(from 11/13/16 sermon - Spencer Teal)

I. **OPEN** - See if there is anyone who wants to share a short testimony, or if there are there specific praise updates to begin CG.

PRAY

Q - Sermon takeaways from those who were in attendance?

***READ ALOUD Matthew 4:1-11**

II. REFLECT

In this passage we see 2 remarkable things: 1) the Spirit of God leading Jesus into the wilderness for 40 days and 2) Satan using this Spirit-led journey to tempt...or try to tempt...Jesus. So, on the one hand we see our Lord doing exactly what the Spirit was calling him to do, but the enemy was still right there trying to get Christ off-task by persuading Him to rely on anything except for The Father for moment by moment sustenance.

We were reminded on Sunday that our casualness in our walk with the Lord is probably causing many of us to trip up more than we know or realize. Why? Because there really is an ongoing battle raging and this battle is going to require more of us than casually opening up the Word of God each day and spending time with other believers on occasion. Rather, we are going to need to be much more intentional...to be much more aware (aware of this raging battle as well as the tendencies of our own hearts)...and to take the Word of God with us as we navigate the waters each and every moment of each and every day.

Discussion - On Sunday, Spencer said that “Our casualness in our walk with the Lord may be causing us to trip up more than we probably realize.” **Read Eph 6:11-13**

Q - How often do you remind yourself of the truths found in these verses? If these verses are true and this battle is real and ongoing, how then should we live? What adjustments must we be willing to make...adjustments that reflect an intentional, vs. a casual, walk with the Lord?

In his book *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, Peter Scazzero says that the book of “Revelation...contains the key to why most present-day Christians are overwhelmed by the culture and the world around us: we underestimate the intensity and power of evil --both outside and inside of us.” There really is a battle of good vs. evil...light vs. darkness, and this battle is ongoing and intense. This is why Eph 6 reminds us to “be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.” We cannot fight this battle with sheer will-power. We need the Lord to fight for us.

Notice in the Matt 4:1-11 passage that Jesus always used the Word of God...words that were written thousands of years earlier...to combat the enemy. **Read II Timothy 3:16-17.** Spend some time mulling over the words in these verses. **Q** - What are these verses saying? What are the implications? If these verses are true...and they are...what should our daily response be?

We were reminded on Sunday that the Word of God is not to be used as devotional material only. Although there is absolutely nothing wrong with taking time each morning to read over the Scriptures with a cup of coffee, or to read through a chapter or two each at a certain time each night, **“Scripture is only useful if we take it with us and use it.”**

Q - Read that last sentence. What does that mean? Practically speaking, how are we to “take it with us?” **Discuss.**

Read Ps. 119:11. Q - What are the implications of this verse?

Spencer gave three suggestions for applying prayer & Scripture on an ongoing basis: 1) Don't underestimate the power of index cards. 2) Make sure you know your own heart & where you are usually tempted. 3) The ECHO phone app.

Q - What are some others?

III. FURTHER APPLICATION -

Hebrews 4:12 - For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 - And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.

Jeremiah 15:16 - Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts.

Joshua 1:8 - This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

IV. CLOSE

Final thoughts?

V. BE ON-MISSION -

We encourage family units to be intentional by reading and discussing the Bible each day this week, and create a specific Bible verse for everyone to memorize. Try using index cards for frequent review.