



September 20th- Hugh Barlett

Matthew 4:1–11 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” ⁴ But he answered, “It is written, “ ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ ” ⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple ⁶ and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, “ ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and “ ‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’ ” ⁷ Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ” ⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written, “ ‘You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.’ ” ¹¹ Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

Christ overcomes temptation

- Kingdom living involves conflict with evil
- In the worst conditions, Christ performs His best
- Devil sows doubt about your identity in Christ
- Devil deceives us about the truth
- Devil promises what he can never deliver
- Christ relies on God’s word

How does the Christian life involve fighting against evil? In our internal life? In our world?

What are times that we are more susceptible to temptations?

How does the devil try to discourage us about our life in Christ?

How does the devil try to deceive us?

How does the devil promise us false things that he will not give us? Or promise us things that will not satisfy?

How can we stand up and overcome the power of the devil?

How does God’s word empower us?



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Matthew 3. In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ² "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." ³ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.' " ⁴ Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, ⁶ and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹ And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. ¹⁰ Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ¹¹ "I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." ¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. ¹⁴ John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" ¹⁵ But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. ¹⁶ And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; ¹⁷ and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

Christ's Kingdom opens the door to heaven

- Fulfills all God's promises for us
- Calls us to repent
- Cultivates the fruit of repentance

Questions

1. In 1517, Martin Luther laid out 95 theses. The first was "When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, 'Repent' (Mt 4:17), he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance." How do you repent or turn to Christ on a daily basis?
2. When God says to Christ, "You are my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased"...notice how this contrasts with the nation of Israel with whom He has wrath? How does this move our hearts to unite ourselves with Christ in faith, so that God may say of us, 'Beloved'?"
3. Christ is the one who fulfills all righteousness, who gathers us like a diligent farmer as hay into the barn, and baptizes us with the Holy Spirit. How does His work on our behalf move us to repent?
4. How was the first century Jewish leader acting presumptuously before God? How do we?
5. How do you need to "strip down to the essentials" to see your need for Christ?
6. What fruit of repentance is God cultivating in your life?