

SBC – Jan. 31, 2021
Matt. 4:1-11 (NKJV)
“The Temptation of Christ”

6

Prayer:

Slide # 1

Theme: *Christ the King*

Outline:

- Chps. 1-2 The Advent of the King. (Proving His LEGAL right to the throne by His genealogy.)
- Chp. 3 The Herald of the King. (His baptism)
- Chp. 4 The Test of the King. (Proving His MORAL right to the throne by not yielding to temptation.)**
- Chps. 5-7 The Pronouncements of the King. (Proving His JUDICIAL right to the throne by accurately interpreting the Mosaic law in the Sermon on the Mount.)
- Chps. 8-10 The Power of the King. (Proving His PROPHETICAL right to the throne by fulfilling prophecy.)
- Chps. 11-12 The Rejection of the King.
- Chp. 13 The Parables of the King.
- Chps. 14-16 The Revelations of the King.
- Chps. 17-20 The Instructions of the King.
- Chps. 21-23 Formal Rejection of the King.
- Chps. 24-25 The Predictions of the King.
- Chps. 26-27 The Passion of the King.
- Chp. 28 The Resurrection of the King.

Matthew wrote to Jews and he wrote to PROVE that Jesus Christ was indeed the promised Jewish Messiah as prophesied about in the OT Scriptures. He first showed that Jesus meets all the genealogical requirements. Then he showed that Jesus had the necessary forerunner in the person of John the Baptist in fulfillment of prophecy. And then he showed that Jesus in fulfillment with prophecy was anointed with the Holy Spirit as seen at His baptism.

Now as we come to chapter 4, we find that the Messiah had to be TESTED to prove His moral qualifications. In all of the synoptic (similar) gospels (Matt, Mk, and Lk) the temptation of Christ follows His baptism. Before Christ could enter into His public ministry He had to be anointed with the Spirit and He had to be TESTED & PROVEN in terms of His character.

Matthew 4:1–11 (NKJV)

1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

Now that the Spirit had uniquely come upon Jesus in full measure Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness (cf. Jn. 3:34). Jesus was fully God but in His incarnation, He assumed the position of humility whereby He set aside the independent use of His divine attributes.

God's plan was for Jesus to depend upon Him as a man – depending on the power of the Spirit to guide Him. Jesus as a MAN is the great and perfect representative of humanity. Paul referred to Him as the second Adam (cf. 1 Cor. 15:45).

Jesus came fulfilling all those Messianic SERVANT passages prophesied about in Isaiah. In Isaiah 42 – 53 there are FOUR prolonged Servant Passages we commonly call “***Servant Songs***” (cf. 42:1-9; 49:1-13; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12). As the Divine Slave Jesus would not do His own thing but rather as a perfectly yielded SERVANT He would humbly obey God at every point culminating in the cross (cf. Phil. 2:5-11). This was to be TESTED right at the outset just prior to His public ministry.

The first Adam was TESTED in the very best of conditions and failed. Israel was tested in the wilderness and failed. Jesus was also TESTED in the harsh environment of the wilderness referring to the barren region northwest of the Dead Sea.

Slide # 2



This was a desolate place in keeping with temptation by the devil. Mark 1:12 says Jesus was there “with the wild beasts”. It was a foreboding scary kind of a place.

But note the Spirit led Jesus out here because God had a specific providential purpose – mainly to allow Jesus to be TESTED.

When it says, “to be tempted by the devil” the word tempted can have one of two meanings.

Slide # 3

The Greek word translated “tempt” or “test” has two meanings: (1) to test or prove (John 6:6; 2 Cor. 13:5; Heb. 11:17); and (2) to solicit to evil. The Holy Spirit tested or proved Christ. The devil sought to lure Him to do evil. – **William MacDonald**

James 1:13 is very clear that God never tempts anyone in the sense of soliciting them to do evil. However, God does allow His servants to be tested. He does allow the devil to tempt people and God uses it as a means of testing them.

When Jesus refuted the devil, He quoted from Deuteronomy where in context Moses was reviewing Israel’s wilderness experience. He said there:

Slide # 4

Deuteronomy 8:2 (NKJV)

2 And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and **test you**, to **know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.**

Even Jesus in His human nature had to learn obedience as seen in Hebrews 5:8. He NEVER did anything wrong, but He did learn what it was like to undergo real temptation – to be TESTED.

It is not wrong to be tempted, it is wrong to yield to temptation. Even Christ was tempted but He never sinned, He never yielded to temptation (cf. Jn. 8:46; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 Jn. 3:5). In our fallenness - times of testing often result in falling to temptation. But that never happened with Jesus. Contrary to us, Jesus had no inner pull towards sin. He had no sin nature. But being human He could be tempted from without – in this case by the agency of the devil.

The OT was very clear that the sacrificial lamb (typified in the Passover lamb) had to be “**without blemish**” and had to be TESTED to make sure it was such.

Slide # 5**Exodus 12:5–6 (NKJV)**

5 Your lamb shall be **without blemish, a male** of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

6 Now you shall **keep it until the fourteenth day** of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

Note there had to be a testing period from the 10th day of the month (Ex. 12:3) until the fourteenth day of the month. The lamb had to be TESTED!

Jesus suffered, “the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God” (1 Pet. 3:18). In the OT the sacrifices always had to be without blemish. The Passover Lamb had to be without blemish (Ex. 12:5). The burnt offering had to be without blemish (cf. Lev. 1). The peace offering had to be without blemish (Lev. 3). The sin offering had to be without blemish (Lev. 4). The trespass offering had to be without blemish (Lev. 5). All of these were types and symbols that looked forward to the ultimate fulfillment in the Messiah Who would be without sin. Thus, it was necessary for the Messiah, introduced by John the Baptist to be the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world, to be TESTED and PROVEN (Jn. 1:29).

In this context the question comes up: Was it possible for Jesus to sin? Concerning the Person of Christ there is deep mystery here that we will never be able to completely fathom.

The NT documents affirm both Jesus’ deity and His humanity, and neither of these affirmations may be permitted to deny the complementary truth. One might argue that Christ’s impeccability [that He could not sin] is a function of His deity but must not be taken to mitigate His humanity, and Christ’s temptability is a function of His humanity but must not be taken to mitigate His deity. – ***D.A. Carson***

Jesus was God and as God it was impossible for Him to sin. This is called impeccability. However, He was also fully human and therefore could experience temptation. When you put it all together Jesus was both fully God and fully human in ONE person. The reality of His deity means He could not sin; the reality of His humanity means He could experience temptation. Oh, the wonder of it all!

The title “devil” literally means “slanderer”. This defines the character of the devil. He is an accuser – a slanderer (cf. Jn. 8:44; Eph. 6:11; Rev. 12:10).

2 And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.

Fasting in the Bible is consistently associated with concentrated prayer. It is a form of self-discipline that shuts out even the mundane activity of eating so that nothing distracts from concentrated prayer and focus on God. In the OT it was a form of humbling oneself before God (Ps. 35:13).

There were two types of fasting. 1) Total fasting from all food and drink was normally restricted to one day. Pious Jews fasted twice a week in this way – on Monday and Thursday (cf. Lk. 18:11-12). 2) There was also long term fasting in which one would continue to drink liquids, but would not eat, or eat very minimally. Luke 4:2 says of Jesus: “***in those days He ate nothing***”. So this was obviously a long term fast in which He evidently drank but ate nothing.

Throughout the Old Testament forty is often associated with sin (Genesis 7:4; 12; Numbers 14:33; 32:13; Deuteronomy 9:25; 25:3; Psalm 95:10; Jonah 3:4). – ***Stanley Toussaint***

Experts tell us that 40 days is about the limit that one can fast without putting yourself in physical jeopardy. In a prolonged fast after a few days the feeling of intense hunger dissipates only to return with a vengeance at the end of 30 or 40 days. Jesus was at this very intense phase of feeling VERY HUNGRY (cf. Ex. 34:28; Duet. 9:9; 1 Kings 19:8).

And here came the devil. He looks for opportunities when we are hungry, tired, weak, sick, lonely, overwhelmed, etc. He NEVER fights fair. His goal is to bring a person down and take advantage of every potential vulnerability to do so.

Slide # 6

There are a number of parallels between Jesus' temptations and the testing of Israel in the wilderness (Dt 8:2). Israel was led by the Spirit (Neh 9:20) as was Jesus (Mt 4:1). Moses fasted for 40 days (Ex 34:28; Dt 9:9) and later Elijah did as well (1 Kg 19:8). Matthew may allude to these possibly to indicate Jesus was the supreme prophet [the Messiah]. – ***Moody Bible Commentary***

Luke 4:2 would seem to indicate that various temptations had occurred throughout the 40-day period but at the end of this time Satan came with full intensity with everything he had to throw at Christ.

3 Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.”

Another title for the devil is “the tempter.” This is what he does. He entices people to sin (cf. 1 Thess. 3:5). He can’t force people to sin but he can solicit. He can tempt! And he is good at what he does.

In the context of Jesus being very hungry the tempter came to Jesus and said, **“If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.”**

The word **“If”** here is better understood as **“Since”**. **“Since You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.”** God the Father had just declared that Jesus was His **“beloved Son”** in whom He was well pleased at His baptism (Mt. 3:17). The devil didn’t challenge this premise, but subtly tried to get Jesus to act on it INDEPENDENTLY of God the Father as a means of alleviating His hunger pain.

There is overlap, but the three basic categories of sin mentioned in 1 John 2:16 seem to correspond to Satan’s temptation strategy with the fall of mankind in Genesis 3 as well as to his temptation of Christ.

Slide # 7

1 John 2:16 (NKJV)

16 For all that is in the world—the **lust of the flesh**, the **lust of the eyes**, and the **pride of life**—is not of the Father but is of the world.

Slide # 8

Temptation to bodily desires

Gen. 3:6 – “good for food”

Matt. 4:3 – “stones become bread”

1 Jn. 2:16 – “the lust of the flesh”

Bodily desires are not necessarily wrong in and of themselves. The issue is this: Is it according to the will and Word of God?

Of course, the devil didn’t mention the fact that this action would be self-willed and not according to the direction of the Father – and therefore SIN! He is a master at subtle manipulation.

Humanly speaking, the thought of bread I am sure was intensely inviting at this point. Jesus did have the power to turn stones into bread! But in His role of SERVANT, He was only to take orders from the Father. Who would He listen to? The devil or God the Father? That was the test! This is always the test! Whose voice are we going to listen to?

This first temptation had to do with appetite, the kind of sins we commonly associate with human desire or bodily lusts. If it appeals to making the flesh feel good, we feel the pull to do it contrary to what God has said - and right there is the temptation! The world lives by the motto: "***If it feels good do it.***" But godliness responds saying, "***I only want to do the will of God. I am not going by my feelings, but rather by the Word of God.***" This is what Jesus did!

4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.' "

Jesus responded by quoting from Deut. 8:3 which recounts a context in which God humbled Israel and evaluated their obedience and whether or not they would depend on Him.

Slide # 9

Deuteronomy 8:3 (NKJV)

3 So He humbled you, **allowed you to hunger**, and **fed you** with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He **might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.**

God taught Israel that they needed to **DEPEND** upon Him. They needed to depend upon His Word which is what faith is all about! Jesus in refuting the devil's temptation to act independently of God quoted this verse which in context emphasizes **DEPENDENCE** upon God's promise of provision (cf. Jn. 4:34).

Note the phrase "***bread alone***". Jesus is saying that life is not merely about physical things; rather its about relying upon God. And reliance upon God is based on the **WORD** of God! Throughout the Bible trust/faith/belief (whatever word you want to use) is always linked to God's Word. God wants us to walk in dependence upon Him and this dependence is grounded in His Word.

In the case of each temptation Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy which is a book associated with Israel's wilderness experience and the lessons that God taught them in that context (cf. Deut. 8:3; 6:13, 16; 10:20). By application this world is a wilderness and in our wilderness wanderings we need to constantly depend upon God – to trust in His Word. Before God this is the great issue in living. This is how He wants us to LIVE – by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God!

Just as God gave the Israelites manna in a supernatural way (Dt 8:3), so also man must rely on God for spiritual feeding. – ***NIV Study Bible***

Yet, I would note that while God supernaturally provided the manna yet, every day the Israelites had to go out and collect it. God's provision does not do away with human responsibility in the process. Yes, God supernaturally is the teacher and thus nourishes our soul with the Word, yet we have to put the time and effort into being in the Word.

Note Jesus quote begins by emphasizing "***Man***" – "*Man shall not live by bread alone.*"

Slide # 10

The various tests were directed against the human nature of Jesus, and he resisted in that realm. However, the perfect union of the divine and human natures in his person made the outcome certain, for God can never sin. But this in no way lessened the force of the attack.

– ***Wycliffe Bible Commentary***

5 Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple,

Luke switches the order of the second and third temptations, evidently for thematic purposes, but the content is the same. The chronological order is represented here in Matthew. The word "then" here in Matthew at each juncture indicates sequence. Also, the Lord's command to the devil, "Away with you, Satan" at the end of the third temptation argues that Matthew followed the actual historical order.

The holy city is Jerusalem (cf. Ps. 122; 137:4-6; Mt. 27:51-53) and the word "pinnacle" means "wing" or "pointed extremity" referring to a high point on the temple complex. The word for "temple" (Gk. hieron) is the general word, not just referring to the sanctuary, but rather to the entire temple complex.

Many commentators think this was probably a place located on the east wall of the temple where there was a sheer drop of about 500 feet into the Kidron Valley below. However, it may have been a HIGH point situated where He could make a grand flying entrance into the public temple courtyard so all could see it in grand fashion (cf. Jn. 6:30).

Rabbinic tradition held that the Messiah in coming to Israel's deliverance would make a grand appearance from the temple roof. They got this based on a certain understanding of Mal. 3:1

Slide # 11

Malachi 3:1 (NKJV)

1 "Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, **Will suddenly come to His temple**, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the LORD of hosts.

6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.' "

Satan's angle was to try and get Christ to use His Personhood as the Son of God in a self-serving sort of way. Again, it should be understood in the sense of, "***Since You are the Son of God...***". And since Christ appealed to Scripture in refuting his first temptation, Satan also quotes Scripture as well. Satan knows the Bible quite well. And so, to buttress his challenge, Satan quoted from Psalm 91:1-2. The only problem is – he MISQUOTED the text. He left out one very important part.

Slide # 12

Psalm 91:11–12 (NKJV)

11 For He shall give His angels charge over you, **To keep you in all your ways.**

12 In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.

The devil conveniently left out that God's promise for protection applies to the Messiah walking in all God's ways. As it was the devil twisted the Word to make it a matter of TEMPTING God. Instead of properly TRUSTING God as stated, the devil made it a matter of sinfully TEMPTING God.

Evidently, Satan was tempting Jesus to prove He was the Messiah in a most sensational way on His own independent terms. It would gain Him immediate acclaim. But again, this would be to act INDEPENDENT of the Father and contrary to His SERVANT role.

Slide # 13

Temptation to Self-Glory

Gen. 3:6 – “desirable to made one wise”

Matt. 4:6 – “throw yourself down”

1 Jn. 2:16 – “the pride of life”

7 Jesus said to him, “It is written again, ‘You shall not tempt the LORD your God.’ ”

Once again in refuting the devil Jesus quoted Scripture, this time He used Scripture to correct Satan’s misuse of Scripture, quoting this time from Deut. 6:16.

Slide # 14

Deuteronomy 6:16 (NKJV)

16 “You shall not tempt the LORD your God as you tempted Him in Massah.

Jesus saw what Satan was tempting Him to do was to in effect sinfully tempt God. Throwing Himself off the temple would not be an exercise in TRUSTING GOD, but rather in TEMPTING GOD.

To tempt God is to put Him to the test! It is the exact opposite of submissively trusting Him! To tempt God is to challenge Him to act. It is to try and force Him to act. It is an attempt to try and manipulate God. In effect, it puts the person in the role of playing God, while God is in the position of being subservient. That NEVER works. God insists on being God!

In Deut. 6:16 Moses was referring back to the incident at Massah where they lacked water and complained against Moses.

Slide # 15

Exodus 17:7 (NKJV)

7 So he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the contention of the children of Israel, and because **they tempted the LORD**, saying, **“Is the LORD among us or not?”**

To try and force the Lord to act on your terms is to TEMPT the LORD! God cannot be forced or coerced! To try and do so is an assault on His LORDSHIP! It is sinfully presumptuous as it fails to yield to God and TRUST Him to act according to His faithfulness!

Many Charismatic teachers really fit into this mold. We can reverently ask, but we cannot demand. It is SIN to ***“Name it and Claim it!”*** on your own terms! We pray in Jesus Name – which is to say ***“according to His will”*** (cf. 1 Jn. 5:14-15). We are not in charge with God being our servant. Who are we to TEST Him? He is God and we are His servants. Keep the order straight. Jesus in His state of humility did just that.

Footnote: When Jesus said, ***“It is written again”*** this shows that sound doctrine is properly understood in light of the totality of Scripture. If you take Scripture in isolation (out of context) you can make the Bible say almost anything. We must always consider the WHOLE counsel of God and not take things out of context. Scripture always agrees with the whole of Scripture when properly understood. ***“A text without a context is a pretext”***.

8 Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

How and where this happened we are not told. The devil is a “supernatural being” and for His sovereign purposes as seen in verse 1 God allowed this to take place.

Somehow supernaturally from this HIGH vantage point the devil was able to SHOW Christ all the glory of all the kingdoms of the world in one gigantic panoramic view. It was impressive to behold! This appealed to the lust of the eyes.

Slide # 16**Temptation through the Eye-gate**

Gen. 3:6 – “pleasant to the eyes”

Matt. 4:8 – “showed Him all the kingdoms”

1 Jn. 2:16 – “lust of the eyes”

The great “Messianic prize” (if you will) is the nations of the world which God had already promised to His Son in due time (cf. Num. 25:15-19; Ps. 2:7-8; Dan. 7:13-14).

Slide # 17

Psalm 2:7–8 (NKJV)

7 “I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.

8 Ask of Me, and **I will give You The nations** for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession.

Slide # 18

Revelation 11:15 (NKJV)

15 Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, **“The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”**

But here Satan was promising the glory of all these kingdoms to Christ right now – without the cross – without anymore waiting. Just one condition...

9 And he said to Him, “All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.”

Footnote: Satan is called “the ruler of this world” (Jn. 12:31; 14:30; 16:11); “the god of this age” (2 Cor. 4:4); who has the whole world under his sway (1 Jn. 5:19; also see Eph. 2:2; Dan. 10:13). Jesus did not contest this. However, he is really a usurper whom because of the fall God has allowed to rule in a very limited capacity for a limited time only.

God ever remains SOVEREIGN over all ruling in the kingdom of men (cf. Dan. 4:17). God gave the dominion to mankind, but mankind lost it to Satan in the fall. We need a HUMAN being to take it back? In Rev. 5 John wept because no one was found worthy. But then John was told not to weep, because the LION of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David has prevailed. That’s Jesus, the GREAT representative of mankind, and in the judgments seen in the book of Revelation He is about to take the world back for mankind from Satan!

But here was Satan offering it to Jesus on the simple condition that Jesus fall down and worship him. This is really the ultimate thing and Satan wanted it. Satan as a fallen being has always wanted what ONLY belongs to God. He has always wanted to be in the position of God (cf. Isa.14:12-15). The ultimate issue is about LORDSHIP – about WORSHIP! Jesus is Lord but Satan wanted Jesus to worship him as Lord! He wanted the top position which belongs to God and God alone!

Satan tempts with immediate gratification whereas God promises those who humble themselves under His mighty hand that He will exalt them in due time (cf. 1 Pet. 5:6). Satan tempted Christ with instant food, instant fame, and instant fortune – but at what price? The devil offers “short cuts” but with long term consequences. Satan is a deceiver and a liar! He promises the glory of the world, but then those who follow him are given eternal HELL! That is a “devil of a deal”.

10 Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’ ”

This was the climactic clash in this spiritual challenge, which ended with Jesus commanding Satan to go away, which he did as seen in verse 11. The name Satan means “**adversary**”. In our study today we see three titles for the devil.

Slide # 19

v. 1 **Devil** – “Slanderer”

v. 3 **The Tempter** -“Entices to do evil”

v. 10 **Satan** – “Adversary”

Satan is really not on your side. He desires nothing but BAD for you. It’s what is in his future and misery loves company – he wants people to join him in his ego-war against God.

Here yet again Jesus quoted what is written in the OT as He applied Deut. 6:13 to the situation. Note Jesus tied worship to service. What you worship is what you serve as the one involves the other. Worship is only to be rendered to God and not to any other!

Note how Jesus in His humanity battled the devil. On all three occasions He referenced the Word of God as the ultimate authority which is the final argument against any and all temptations. We cannot improve on this! In our battle with Satanic temptation standing on the Word is the KEY to victory.

Slide # 20

The KEY to spiritual warfare

v. 4 “It is written...”

v. 7 “It is written...”

v. 10 “For it is written...”

Jesus repulsed the mightiest blows of Satan not by a thunderbolt from heaven, but by the written Word of God employed in the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, a means available to every Christian.

– ***Wycliffe Bible Commentary***

The word is POWERFUL, and Satan cannot stand against it. He must yield to the Word. If you are in a temptation battle there is no greater weapon than resolutely quoting Scripture, meaning you are not just mouthing words, but taking your stand on them. Quoting them must be your confession of faith. This is powerful!

In the midst of temptation our recourse is the Word of God. But we can only benefit from this weapon to the degree that we know the Word. This is why it is so important to hide God’s Word in our hearts. When we are under siege in spiritual warfare if we know God’s Word, we can depend on the Holy Spirit to bring to mind what is needed when it is needed. The more Word you have in your heart the more equipped you are.

11 Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

The devil gave it his best shot but he came up empty with Jesus because Jesus gave Him the Word against which he was defenseless. Truth triumphed over deceptive temptation. And so, at the command of Christ (showing who really was Lord) the devil left him. However, Luke 4:13 notes it was only “until an opportune time.”

And then the angels came and ministered to Him. Exactly how they ministered we are not told, but the word “minister” can mean “to serve as a table-waiter” and therefore many commentators think the angels at this time came and ministered food to Jesus.

Ironically, whereas the devil wanted Christ to wrongfully press the angels into service as seen in verse 6; here after Christ did it God’s way the angels did come and minister to Him in accordance with God’s will and purpose.

When God’s children humbly wait on the Lord in His good timing He comes and meets our need in a way that brings glory to Him.

What can we learn and apply from this section in the area of temptation. As Christians we all wrestle with being tempted.

First, it is good to know that when the devil comes knocking at your door he usually doesn’t tap lightly. Temptations tend to come in waves rather than drips. This is what Paul meant when he spoke of having on the full armor so that you can “withstand in the evil day” (Eph. 6:13). The evil day is when Satan throws every thing he’s got at you.

Note this from Christ, the perfect example in the matter of spiritual warfare and the only one who has never lost a battle.

It is essential that we be controlled by the Holy Spirit. But note that just because you are controlled by the Spirit doesn’t mean you won’t be attacked. Jesus was led by the Spirit right into the arena to be tempted by the devil for God’s sovereign purposes. God has His reasons and His ways.

Second, in spiritual warfare prayer is very important. Fasting and prayer denote concentrated focus on God which is key to walking in victory.

And finally, Jesus shows us HOW to resist the devil in such a way that he will flee. The devil is powerless against those who resist Him with the Word! Want to resist successfully! Learn the Word! Saturate your soul with the Word! Memorize the Word! Meditate on the Word! Be a walking Bible and the devil will never have his way with you.

Ephesians 6 is the other key passage on spiritual warfare in the NT. There Paul instructs on how to stand against the schemes of the devil as he emphasizes applying the whole armor of God.

It's all DEFENSIVE, except for one thing – which is “sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Eph. 6:17). When the devil comes at you and you wrestle with the forces of darkness you better have your SWORD ready. It is this that puts the forces of darkness to flight.

Slide # 21

James 4:7 (NKJV)

7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

You submit to God by submitting to the Word – that's what Jesus did. You resist the devil by resisting him with the Word – that's what Jesus did!

1 Pet. 5:8 tells us the devil goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. He wants to try and destroy your testimony – your life as a Christian. He wants to render you completely ineffective. 1 Pet. 5:9 says, “Resist him, steadfast in the faith”. That is KEY! Resisting him steadfast according to what “is written” – according to “the faith” is to resist him with SOUND DOCTRINE – with truth in keeping with the faith.

In matters of temptation we need to be humble. As Paul says, “let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.” (1 Cor. 10:12). But then he also said:

Slide # 22

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NKJV)

13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

The way of escape is brought out in Hebrews (cf. Heb. 2:16-18).

Slide # 23

Hebrews 2:18 (NKJV)

18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

Hebrews 4:15–16 (NKJV)

15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

In time of oppressive temptation come to Jesus. He is able to help. He knows what is like and He now sits on a throne of grace to dispense mercy and grace to help in the time of need when we are tempted.

George Bernard Shaw was a famous British playwright. He owned a Bible that he sold at an auction a few years before he died. They discovered that Shaw had written on the flyleaf of the Bible the following words: ***“This book is a most undesirable possession...I must get rid of it. I really cannot bear it in my house!”***

The Word is powerfully convicting and it’s TRUTH is so strong none can resist its power – not even the devil. Shaw is long gone, but the Bible continues.

The French atheist Voltaire, standing cocky in the midst of the Enlightenment and watching the spread of Deism and the uprising of religious liberalism all around, proudly proclaimed that the Bible would be relegated to museums and soon Christianity would be a thing of the past. But within 40 years of his death in 1778 the Bible was being printed in what had previously been his home. Does God have a sense of humor!

Critics come and go! Those most hostile to the Bible come and go! And even the devil will come and go! But the Word of our God shall stand forever! “It is written, It is written, It is written” will endure forever! It is the final authoritative Word on everything for it is the very Word of God!

Whatever the world throws at you respond with “It is written. Whatever the flesh throws at you respond with “It is written”. Whatever the devil throws at you, respond with “It is written”. This is what Jesus did and it cannot be improved upon!

All the forces of HELL cannot stand against what God has written. “It is written” shall stand forever! God help us to faithfully stand on what is WRITTEN!