“The King and His Kingdom: At War in the Wilderness”

Matthew 4:1-11

(notes based on the sermon by Pastor Steve Massey, Hayden Bible Church, 7/3/22)

Our God, Jesus, has been tempted to sin in every way His children have, yet He defeated

sin every time. Neither the flesh nor the devil takes a day off. Satan even comes to church to see who he can distract! In Matt. 4, Jesus conquers temptation on His people’s behalf **and** He shows His people how to do the same.

Jesus endured 40 days of fasting in the hot, desolate, Judean wilderness **BY CHOICE**. (Q1) Isn’t it interesting, that this period of temptation came soon after the Father’s affirming words at His baptism. In some seasons, the life of faith seems easy. We say to ourselves “I got this.” And then we come to the wilderness! (read 1Cor. 10:12) Trials and temptations very quickly follow seasons of blessing.

Temptation is not the same as sin. It’s what you do with it that could become sin. Walking in God’s will does not exempt God’s people from temptation. Do you ever feel “This is so difficult, it can’t be God’s will.” BALONEY! Temptation often comes when we are closest to the Lord. But… temptation is a work of the devil; it’s not from God. God can use temptation to train you in the sufficiency of God’s grace. Satan tempts us to destroy us; God supplies strength to get past the temptation to prove His faithfulness.

Matt. 4:2 states that Jesus was hungry. I would guess that He was famished! Jesus experienced all the weaknesses that other humans experience. We really do have a great High Priest who empathizes with us (Heb. 2:17-18). In Matt. 4:3 Jesus faced the temptation to serve Himself, to live in some way other than dependence on the Father. This is one of the greatest temptations facing us, too. God’s people are meant to live by the promises of God, even if we don’t “feel” that way (Deut. 8:2-3). You are meant to live by faith in God’s covenant commitment to you. In Matt. 4:5-6, Satan quotes the Bible as part of his temptation. Satan knows the Bible better than you do. He often quotes it, but he usually twists it.

In Matt. 4:8-9, Jesus faced a third temptation, trying to achieve God’s goals without God’s means. Satan often gives us temptations to take shortcuts in our daily living. (Q2) Jesus’ answer speaks of the necessity of serving the Father and not ourselves. Jesus was perfectly obedient to the Father. He died for us and now lives for us. He never took a shortcut.

If your salvation is based on anything else than Jesus’ life and death and resurrection, then you’re deceived. His record of victory over temptation is credited to you! Jesus victory over temptation is a victory shared with His people. His perfect obedience is credited to all who trust in Him. God’s people fight temptation from the high ground of Jesus’ victory. In the end, Jesus’ human weakness (hunger) was ministered to, in God’s timing and in God’s way (Matt. 4:11). This is an example to all of us.

Our hope is NOT that one day we will be so “churchified” that we will no longer face temptation. This is our hope: God’s people fight temptation in His power and by His means. He always provides a way of escape (1Cor. 10:13). (Q3) (Q4)

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why do you think Jesus fasted for 40 days in the wilderness after His baptism?
2. Pastor Steve mentioned that we are tempted to take shortcuts in the training of our children, studying the Bible, and meeting with God’s people. Why would a shortcut in each of those areas lead to problems? In what other areas of our life are we tempted to take shortcuts?
3. Summarize the 3 temptations that Satan put before Jesus. How are you tempted in similar ways?
4. What are the lessons we can learn from how Jesus successfully faced temptation? Name at least 3!

“Are You Washed in the Blood of the Lamb?” (Hoffman)

1. Have you been to Jesus for the cleansing pow’r?  
   Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?  
   Are you fully trusting in His grace this hour?  
   Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?
   * Refrain:  
     Are you washed in the blood,  
     In the soul-cleansing blood of the Lamb?  
     Are your garments spotless? Are they white as snow?  
     Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?
2. Are you walking daily by the Savior’s side?  
   Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?  
   Do you rest each moment in the Crucified?  
   Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?
3. When the Bridegroom cometh will your robes be white?  
   Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?  
   Will your soul be ready for the mansions bright,  
   And be washed in the blood of the Lamb?
4. Lay aside the garments that are stained with sin,  
   And be washed in the blood of the Lamb;  
   There’s a fountain flowing for the soul unclean,  
   Oh, be washed in the blood of the Lamb!