

The Temptation of Jesus

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[0 : 00] Matthew chapter 3, verse 13. And Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John.

! But John tried to deter him, saying, ! I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me? Jesus replied, Let it be so now.

It is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness. Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water.

And at that moment, heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, This is my Son, whom I love. With Him I am well pleased.

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

[1 : 06] The tempter came to him and said, If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread. Jesus answered, It is written, Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written, He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

Jesus answered him, It is also written, Do not put the Lord your God to the test. Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. All this I will give you, he said, if you will bow down and worship me. Jesus said to him, Away from me, Satan, for it is written, Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.

Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him. Let me take this opportunity again to thank you.

[2 : 28] Thank you, Pastor, and thank you really all for allowing me to be among you and to get opportunity to say something about what God is doing in Eldoret and also to bring God's word.

I don't take this for granted. You, as a church, have gone through very challenging times, and I'm aware of that just in a little way.

Of course, we've been in contact with Pastor John. He's been very busy, and of course, with all that has happened. So writing has not been a lot, but when he's been able to write and also hearing from some of you brethren, we've been able to pray for you as you've been going through these challenging times.

When challenges come our way, and I speak now as God's people, it's a time of, it can be a time of great encouragement, but equally, it's a time when some in the Christian, you know, in the church begin to wonder, or at least they are set to wonder, is God with us?

How come something like that can happen? And we claim to know God, to serve God. And it could well have been a case with you through the very heavy challenges that you've gone through, and that Pastor continues to go through.

[4 : 33] In our little church and short life, we have gone through a few things like that. When the demolition of our temporary structures took place in 2014, it was a time definitely for us to see the Lord's mighty hand in a unique way, but then there were some also in the church that were looking and saying, Pastor, is God really with us?

Why has this happened? It really was a time of learning afresh. And may that be the case with you, just to learn that the Lord indeed is in control of all that goes on and takes place.

The passage that was read will be what I want to use. Now, back in Eldoret, in my church back there, I've been preaching now for a number of months through the book of Matthew.

I began chapter 1, verse 1, and months later, we've only reached Matthew chapter 6, verse 8. But when I was preaching and I had just finished chapter 3 and moving to chapter 4, something struck me.

Because I was presenting to the church what was the burden in Matthew's heart to his people.

[6 : 28] And Matthew was out really to show who the Lord Jesus Christ really is. And right from the beginning, he seeks to show, and he sought to show that he is true God and true man.

And Matthew showed that in amazing ways. Including a time when Herod sought for Jesus while he was very young to get rid of him, to finish him.

but amazing how this new king, King Jesus, of course, survived by God's great plans, Matthew is out to show us that.

Now, when we come to chapter 3 and as we're moving to the end of chapter 3, Matthew seemed to be having really excitement to show who Jesus is that he's truly God, truly man, he is the king that we so much need.

And those remaining verses, which we read, verses 13 to 17, demonstrate something or reveal something about Jesus.

[8 : 01] Jesus is being declared as the king who is the true man but indeed who is the son of God and all are testifying to his greatness.

John himself really is testifying to his greatness there in verse 13 verse 14 by demonstrating that Jesus I am unfit to be the one baptizing you because of who you are.

And so John testifies of his greatness. Jesus himself equally demonstrates of his own greatness when he tells John no come on John just come down John verse 15 but Jesus answered and said permitted to be so for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness then he allowed him Jesus himself without being proud tells John John there is work to be done you have seen something about me it scares you John but don't be scared do the work that needs to be done John because it is fitting to fulfill all righteousness and so Jesus acknowledges his own unique position as though that is not enough then we see the old heavens declaring it so there is the the

John testifying that he's great the Lord Jesus Christ demonstrates that he is great but indeed heaven itself finally declares the greatness of Jesus when you look at verse 16 and verse 17 then Jesus when he had been baptized I'm reading New King James version and you may find some bit of variation in words or the arrangements of sentences but then this is what we read verse 16 then Jesus when he had been baptized came up immediately from the water and behold the heavens were opened to him and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon him and suddenly a voice came from heaven saying this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased friends without a doubt the Lord

Jesus is great he is great he is declared by all to be great and therefore fit for the work that he has come to do John John has told not John Matthew has told us in chapter 1 verse 21 she will bring forth a son and you'll call his name Jesus for he will save his people from their sin and so the Lord Jesus is being set before us as an able savior now when all that has been done this is like what would happen or what you know the elections have taken place the winner has been declared and in a sense you'd expect if he's president

[12 : 00] Trump you'd expect him the following day to be in the office executing the work because the election period has been long and there's been bruising every side you know but finally when he's declared to be the president you'd expect him to go straight into work and this is what in a sense we should expect here the Lord Jesus up to the end of chapter 3 no doubt he is the able savior John testifies he acknowledges it and heaven declares it but he doesn't get into the office and begin the work if you look at chapter 4 verses 12 onwards and particularly verse 17 when he's gone to to

Galilee verse 17 from that time Jesus began to preach and say repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand that is why he came to declare repentance and he's able to do so but he doesn't begin declaring repentance on the repentance forgiveness on the repentance yet there is an interlude if you like there is something that is happening from the moment of his we would call immigration presented to the public this is indeed my son and before he begins to preach God's word and say repent the kingdom of God is at hand something is happening in between I want us to just stand back I'm not going to execute the old passage

I'm not going to exegete it I'm not going to expound it but I want us to stand back and try to think what is this happening what is this happening the temptation of the Lord Jesus you see the

temptation of the Lord Jesus comes just after he's been declared the inauguration has taken place he's about to declare repentance now to everyone who believes but between his inauguration and his declaring come turn repent there's something that has happened here that's the something I want us to see the way I want us to see basically then the temptation of Jesus Christ so that's really my theme the temptation of the Lord Jesus Christ but

I want us to see it by standing back and asking why is it placed between the end here and the beginning here why do we have it two points that I want us to be able to remember this passage with number one the necessity the necessity of Jesus' temptation and then number two we will try to see the necessity of Jesus' humanity the fact that he was tempted and the fact that he was a human was it necessary so the first the necessity of Jesus' temptation and so just I've asked I'll ask again are these verses really necessary and as I've tried to explain we could read chapter 3 verse 17 and move straight to chapter 4 verse 12 and we would not we would say we would not miss anything in fact these verses verses 1 to 11 of chapter 4 seem to almost be something spoiling it

Jesus has been declared the son of God Jesus preaches repentance but why have this temptation in the middle and so the necessity of Jesus temptation are these verses necessary the three gospel writers tell us that yes they are necessary they are necessary for one they all recorded it none of them avoided recording the temptation that Jesus went through you see the temptation of Christ remains a mystery we will never fathom we will never understand it to the bottom of it and for one reason think of this how can

[17 : 30] God because remember he's been declared to be truly God so how can God who cannot be tempted to sin how can he you know he cannot sin how can he be tempted to sin was the devil trying something that he knows he cannot do anyway how can God who cannot sin be tempted to sin and that has bothered many people and so the way they try to get around it or to try to get away from this which seem to be embarrassing to them is to find other ways of explaining the temptation of Jesus at least three there are some who then have concluded because it's too much to bear they have concluded by saying yes

Jesus is man true man but Jesus is God just to some measure and they do that then to find a reason as to how it is that then he could be tempted he's true man yes but he's only God somehow but then there are others also who have said he stopped being God when he became man they even tried to use scripture to try and prove their point so some have rushed to Philippians chapter 2 verse 7 that Jesus emptied himself they say if some of you would know the kenosis theory the emptying himself so that what we have is yes

Jesus but really there is no God in him he's not God but Jesus did not leave behind his divine nature no he did not leave that he laid it aside yesterday at the picnic what a day and indeed I carry home quite a bit I took a few photos we'll try to make you know the those boxes that we used and then because I'm I think I'm the only one who knows so I'll be able to add my own things but anyway the point is we had a wonderful day and the way my dear brother Stan handled the situation we played even with young ones there and some of you and I thank

God for that you left your whatever you know different places that God has given you in this society all that rank you left and we were all on the ground there same level under stands leadership oh yes and rule too but you see it just helps us to see that the Lord Jesus laid aside his privileges he was not emptied of them he laid them aside and so as I have said some are saying well he's man but he's not God in the full sense some are saying he stopped being God when he became man while some are saying that really the temptations that

Jesus went through were not real they were made up they were just put up so that people would think oh no no my friends all these views are against the Bible indeed anyone who holds those views do not have the gospel the gospel the good news comes to us if and when we see and understand who the Lord Jesus Christ truly is Jesus Christ is true God and true man in one person two natures forever now that's not just a mouthful but that is really so deep but it is something that we need to know and we need to hang upon we may never explain it fully but we need to know it

[23 : 05] Jesus Christ is truly God and truly man in one person and two natures forever and that he is completely sinless he cannot sin you see friends to sin is to deny God really that is the the essence of sin is to deny God but Jesus could not deny himself his temptations were real and deadly they were real and deadly you see I say that because the one introduced to us in chapter 4 verses 1 to 11 it's not just some gimmick it's not just some play with words so that people think oh

Jesus must have gone through a difficult time no this is Satan the devil also called in various scriptures the adversary the accuser of brethren he was there present and if you do not believe in a real devil do you know what Jesus did there is a real devil you know this passage and I hope by doing this you may then have the desire to now go to this passage and read the temptation of the Lord Jesus at least with a measure of awareness you see when we get to be aware of what has gone on in a situation we begin to appreciate it afresh

I arrived in this wonderful town of Bremen on Friday and did really have a good time but then in the evening we had a meal together in the home of brother Tom and Cindy and it was great we did really have a good time and the food was wonderful meat and all the other things to go with it but then in the process as we were on the table then the talk came up as to the process of how that meat was made to be what it was on the table for us to eat the process was long hours with care that went into it and I listened to that explanation and you know what it gave me a fresh appetite! Indeed and I went for another serving a big one this time is because really I now have I had at that moment a fresh appreciation of what had gone on in the preparation now I say that when we understand something of what the Lord Jesus Christ went through to bring our salvation to be accomplished oh friends we will appreciate it like we've never done before I got saved in some meeting a number of years ago in 1971 when the preacher and I can't remember the text but I remember when he challenged us that you may be smart to cover up your sin and I was a hypocrite myself but you will not be able to escape on the judgment day and that caught me the fact that judgment day is coming with

God nothing can pass and he will then find out and know and you know parade all who have been but hypocrites and I realized it was my time to own up my hypocrisy and have dealings with God now I didn't know much then at that moment of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ and it's only with time that I got to know Christ and slowly began to appreciate his work but that's what I want us to see that he went through so much for us as here recorded in chapter 4 verses 1 to 11 you see my friends our version Matthew chapter 4 verse 1 and 2 tell us that then

[28 : 39] Jesus was led by the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil and when he had fasted 40 days and 40 nights afterward he was hungry and verse 3 and when the tempter came to him he said if you are the son of God command that these stones become bread and often we have thought many think that he must have had a quiet wonderful time you know in the wilderness for those 40 days but at the end now he was hungry then the devil meets him often I thought like that however Matthew puts it that way but really the whole period that the Lord Jesus was in the wilderness he was going through temptation!

for 40 days for 40 days by the devil and in those days he ate nothing and afterward when he had ended he was hungry and the devil said to him if you are the son of God command this stone to become bread and so what we are really seeing here it wasn't a wonderful quiet time and then at the end he was hungry the devil approaches him no what we are seeing here and so we can go back to Matthew 4 is a period of 40 days of serious deadly temptation from the devil by the devil in fact my friends God in his grace prevents us from knowing what the Lord Jesus Christ went through for those 40 days

God has spared us from that and God has just allowed us to see the three of those temptations right at the end but what he went through fighting with the devil is kept from us by his grace the question still must be asked I trust you have not lost it was all this necessary and the answer is yes all this was vital as a part and parcel of our redemptive work or his redemptive work for us it was important that the Lord Jesus Christ fulfills!

all righteousness as we saw in chapter 3 verse 15 you see the devil friends right from Adam the devil has had in bondage in slavery as hostage all the descendants of Adam all but now in the scene the last Adam comes and if he is to do good to the seed of Abraham then this last Adam must come face to face with the enemy of God's people he's been declared the son of God even the devil knows but now he must face the devil he must fight the devil he must subdue the devil if his people would go free

Matthew chapter 12 verse 29 captures that Matthew chapter 12 verse 29 of course the Lord Jesus Christ has been accused by the Pharisees and the scribes over almost you know they were almost saying yeah he's using gimmicks verse 25 the Lord Jesus say it's recorded Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them every kingdom divided against itself is brought to destruction and every city or house divided against itself will not stand and if Satan casts out Satan he's divided against

himself how then will his kingdom stand and if I curse out demons by Beelzebub by whom do your sons curse them out therefore they shall be your judges 28 but if

[34 : 14] I curse out demons by the spirit of God surely the kingdom of God has come upon you or else how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods unless he first binds the strong man and then he will plunder his house and all by nature this morning all by nature are the goods of the devil of Satan and you see in this passage then the declared son of God must face our ark and his and our enemy the devil and fights him fights him and wins indeed my friends the battle was won when the Lord Jesus Christ was victorious in the wilderness yes it's true

Satan the devil continued if you like to wreak havoc but indeed his defeat in the wilderness demonstrates that victory is finally on the way a matter of time so it was necessary for the Lord Jesus Christ to defeat Satan and so release us his people that understanding is important the temptation of Jesus was necessary but not only that our time is quickly gone let me quickly show you that the necessity of Jesus Christ humanity so it was necessary that he should be tempted and in the temptation he won but now was it really necessary for him to be a human that has caused people a lot of problems they are happy to see

Jesus as God but when you talk to them when they have got to explain that Jesus is truly man they feel bad they feel we are demeaning him you see look at this this way friends God cannot be tempted but Jesus Christ was tempted so what do we make of that this is what we make that he is truly man man he is truly man Christ humanity is crucial if he's not truly man then you know what we have no true and adequate representative before God really but the writer to the Hebrews would not let that go he tells us the writer to the Hebrews chapter 2 verse 17 shows how important how crucial it is that Jesus is truly man verse 17 Hebrews 2 therefore in all things he the Lord Jesus Christ had to be made like his brethren that he might be a merciful unfaithful high priest in things pertaining to make propitiation for the sins of the people for in that he himself has suffered being tempted he is able to aid those who are tempted so his humanity is crucial you know every religion in the world strive!

to make some contact with God every religion in the world even the heathens you know the number of some parts of Africa still people are still quite dipped in their heathen ways of life but even the heathens somehow want to reach God want to see God even the Roman Catholic Church that's the all purpose why they invented the help of Mary to help them my friends contact God but are they right no they are wrong whether they be the Roman Catholics or the heathens in their efforts to reach God they are wrong you see we don't need

[39 : 40] Mary we don't need idols why God has been manifested in the flesh that's how crucial the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ is and if we deny his humanity honestly we we don't have a true religion no we don't have a true religion humanity of Christ is important and so preaching through the book of Matthew as I'm doing but when I came through this it struck me and I thought let me definitely benefit by thinking through this and preparing to bring it before my people back home but

I hope my friends that just taking a step back and thinking of the temptation of the Lord Jesus was it necessary for him to go through all that and then was it necessary to be a human you know to have a true like his true humanity are those things necessary why didn't we just see him declare the son of God move into Galilee to preach!

that connection is important is crucial he had to defeat Satan and he needs to represent us before God let me ask you to remember these three simple points as we go take away like you go to a quick food place and you they give you chips to you know to to carry as you either you eat as you go or when you're back home then you now open and enjoy them I want us to remember this to take with us these three simple points one the purity of the Lord Jesus the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is pure is sinless that is crucial for us now of course you read from chapter one through to chapter three he he's not he he wasn't seen to be the great holy recognizable leader no Herod himself wanted to finish him and in the process finished all the children in the in the whole community the Pharisees didn't have much to say about him in fact he was because he lived in Nazareth he was called Nazarene and it's a word to despise a person but the Lord Jesus Christ himself was pure was holy and my friends I am emphasizing this the devil harassed him but this who was harassed who is holy is the very one who we need his righteousness his holiness if we would relate with

God he was so pure he was able to tell the scribes and the Pharisees what do you have against me you have nothing against me who among us here can say that at least with a clear conscience

somehow there is guilt in us in one way or another we are not always perfect the Lord Jesus was conscious of his purity he is our righteousness if we would be saved if you would be members of his kingdom his kingdom is not on our own righteousness it is the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ he's the one you need he's the one I need if he was not pure then we do not have one who would bring us to God but not only that dear friends in the second place

[44 : 37] I see his victory let's go away thinking of his victory not only his purity but also his victory and his victory over Satan in these 11 verses and the way he responded to the temptations of the devil he was victorious at the end Luke says the devil then left him yes for a moment and hoping for another attack but the devil left him he was victorious he defeated the devil hope for us is in him and if you are in the Lord Jesus Christ there is hope oh friends the devil will come the devil will tempt and we must constantly be looking around of course understanding the ways of the devil by reading the scriptures and seeking to to apply it in our lives then things which previously we had not seen as the ways that the devil comes in tempts us and we fall now

God's word comes to us and and we see the devil devil that is your way I will avoid it and all my friends is because the Lord Jesus Christ is victorious we will be victorious in him temptations are many they have many for individuals and us a church as God's people but our victory is in the Lord Jesus who was victorious and then finally not only his purity not only his victory but his mercy he's a merciful God the Lord Jesus is merciful when we follow Christ we too will be tempted I've said that we will be tempted but we need to know that we have one who sympathizes with us and is qualified to do that for us again back in

Hebrews Hebrews chapter 4 we find this Hebrews chapter 4 verse 16 let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help the time of need now that is because verse 15 tells us something about Christ 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 and so we can go to him he's been tempted he was victorious he's therefore merciful we can go to him we will receive mercy and I end with that passage we've read in chapter 2 of Hebrews verse 17 again therefore in all things he had to be made like his brethren that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to

God to make propitiation for the saints of the people for in that he himself has suffered being tempted he is able to aid those who are tempted friends as individuals I know I know you go through temptations like myself but there is one who we can look to he will aid us and that is the Lord Jesus Christ more could be said thank you I've gone beyond time but let's leave it there let's pray oh Lord our God thank you that the Lord Jesus Christ came truly an able savior but it was necessary for him to go through temptations yes it was necessary because in that temptation he defeated the devil Satan our accuser he will accuse us yes but he's defeated and thank you that the Lord Jesus who is truly God is equally truly man we must not be embarrassed about that we must be willing to tell our friends at school and our colleagues and in the neighborhood that he's truly God and truly man and we need him his two natures to be our true savior those of us who already know Christ our savior here oh God help us to know him more to to dig deep to understand all that he went through we will appreciate the salvation then we have in him Lord those in this congregation right now who still are without the savior the devil is strong the devil is powerful they cannot resist him by themselves he has bound them the only hope they have and so we pray for any who is unsaved here oh

[50 : 43] God may they look up to the strong man Jesus may they cry to the Lord Jesus he has come to seek and to save and he declares repent the kingdom of God is here this is our prayer for them Lord may they not may none hear children teenagers adults who are not saved may they not wait till tomorrow or another time this is the day of salvation and in Christ the devil is defeated may they not reject the savior anymore and if the savior suffered struggled yes victoriously so but if the savior struggled with the devil to release us may this be clear to the unsaved they cannot release themselves they need to run to the savior now please hear our prayer remember this dear church

Lord through the challenges that they are going may you hold them together may you cause them to grow in a fresh way you have visited them in unique ways Lord of late but this is a body of your people Christ loves and Christ died for Christ defeated Satan for them may they grow strong then now and forward be with Pastor John he's away strengthen him Lord through all that is happening may he know that he's serving a victorious Christ a holy Christ a merciful Christ please hear our prayer this we pray in Jesus name amen