



The Gospel of Matthew: Sermon on the Mount

Fighting Temptation: Matthew 3:13-4:11 (February 1 & 2)

Read Matthew 3:13-3:17

1. What do you think was running through the mind of John the Baptist when Jesus approaches wanting to be baptized?

2. Jesus does not need “the baptism of repentance,” as he has nothing to repent from, yet Jesus insists. What does Jesus mean when he explains: “Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness?” (See Isaiah 53:11–12 and 2 Corinthians 5:21)

3. Jesus was baptized because he had to be identified with those he came to save. Describe your own baptism or the experience of seeing others baptized?

4. How can meditating on the truth that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, draw you closer to Christ and towards dependence upon the Spirit in living a righteous life pleasing to the Father?

5. The Spirit of God rests upon Jesus as He comes up from the water. How does the presence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians make a difference in how one lives? (Romans 8: 1-11)

6. Jesus was loved and was pleasing to the Father. You too are deeply loved by God. What are practical ways you can live a life pleasing to God? (Ephesians 5: 1-21)

Read Matthew 4:1-11

7. Do you think temptation is a word that the Church talks about too much or too little? Why do you think this is so?

8. The tempter tempts Jesus with food after He has been fasting for forty days and forty nights? Why do you think the devil does this?

9. Compare the words of the Father in Matthew 3:17 to the words spoken by the tempter in Matthew 4:3. How is the tempter using the same strategy as he did with Eve in the garden? (See Genesis 3:1)

10. How does the twisting of God's word lead us to build upon the sand and not upon the rock (7:24–27)?

11. In verses 5 & 6 the devil responds to Jesus' quoting from Deuteronomy by quoting Psalm 91:11–12. He seems to know the Bible quite well! Read Psalm 91:9–16 to get the parts the devil left out. How does the full quote from this Psalm change everything?

12. God surely tests his people (think of Abraham and Isaac - Genesis 22) but it is the devil who tempts to evil (James 1:13). What is the difference between testing and tempting?

13. How does Jesus' response in this passage demonstrate an uncompromising loyalty to God?

14. How can you use the way Jesus responds to temptation to combat temptation in your own life?

15. Why should we actually "ride on the coattails" of the One who remains steadfast against Satan in the wilderness rather than ourselves when faced with temptation and sin?