

The Problem of Temptation

Matthew 4:1-11

- I. What is the source of temptation?
 1. It is not God (James 1:13-15).
 2. It is Satan (2 Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9).
- II. What is the scope of temptation?
 1. Three appeals (Matt. 4:1-11).
 - a. The satisfaction of physical need.
 - b. A presumption and testing of God.
 - c. The acquiring of worldly possessions and position.
 2. Three things used to tempt us (1 John 2:15-17).
 - a. The lust of the flesh.
 - b. The lust of the eyes.
 - c. The pride of life.
- III. What are the steps to victory?
 1. You must acknowledge sin in your own life.

—Agreeing about its nature, its presence, and its results.
 2. You must accept the death of Christ as payment for your sin and forgiveness.
 - a. Christ's death was complete satisfaction as to the righteous demands of the law (Rom. 9:22; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26-27).
 - b. Christ's death was sufficient as to His ability and the amount of sin to be paid for (1 John 2:2).
 - c. Christ's death was substitutionary only for those who believe it (Matt. 20:28; Heb. 9:28; 10:14; 1 John 1:9)
 3. You must avoid the temptation to ignore, justify, or hide your sin.
 - a. By realizing you cannot hide from God (Ps. 139:1-6; Heb. 4:13).
 - b. By recognizing that the blessing of God cannot be upon your life and service (Ps. 66:18; Matt. 5:23-24).
 - c. By refusing to hide or cover up your sin (Prov. 28:13).
 4. You must apply the principles of God's word in order to have freedom from guilt feelings and deliverance from sinful practices (Ps. 119:9-11; Rom. 6:16; Gal. 5:16-26).

Review

1. What do we learn about the source of temptation from:
 - a. James 1:13-15
 - b. 2 Corinthians 11:3 and Revelation 12:9?
2. With what things did Satan tempt Christ in Matthew 4:1-11? How did Christ answer the temptations?
3. Compare Matthew 4:1-11 to 1 John 2:15-17. What parallels can you draw?
4. Does sin continue to be a threat for the believer, or is it no longer a problem according to the Bible (Ps. 51:5; Rom. 5:12; 1 John 1:8, 10)?
5. What is the relationship of Christ's death to sin, according to Matthew 20:28 and 1 John 1:9?
6. What should be our response to sin in our own lives, as believers (Prov. 28:13; Gal. 5:16-26)?

Further Consideration

1. Look one more time at 1 John 2:15-17. Can you attach some contemporary words to the three avenues of temptation listed here? Can you give some present-day examples?
2. The Bible tells us that Jesus was "without sin," and yet He was tempted by Satan. What does that indicate concerning the relationship between temptation and sin itself? Does this help you or hinder you in your walk with Christ?
3. What do you think would be the dangers of denying that believers can have any problem with temptation and yielding to it?
4. How does Psalm 119:9, 11 help you in learning how to deal with temptation and sin?

Going Further

Spend one day during the next week clipping advertisements or noting radio and television commercials that you think are geared to one of the three avenues of temptation in 1 John 2:15-17. Keep specific notes, then review them later to get a better idea of what we, as believers, are up against every day!