

Bible Study Outline/Handout
"40 Days of An Intensified Life"
Lent Bible Study

Presented by Rev. Dr. Andre J. Lewis

Matthew 4:1-11
Part I

I. Expect temptation.

Temptation is inevitable. Even good people are tempted. Even people who walk in the Spirit are tempted.

Matthew said, (v. 1) *Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.*

- A. Did you get that? He was led by the Spirit. He was doing exactly what God wanted him to do, and still he faced temptation.
 - 1. We have a tendency to think, when we face temptation, that God must have abandoned us or there must be something wrong with us, or else we wouldn't be experiencing temptation in our lives. That's not true;
 - 2. The Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted, but it wasn't God who tempted Jesus.

- B. Temptation is inevitable, but it doesn't come from God.
The Bible says ...*When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone* ... (James 1:13)
 - 1. God's purpose is not to tempt us, but to give us power over temptation.
 - 2. Right before Jesus went to the desert to be tempted, he was baptized by John the Baptist.
 - 3. One commentator called the baptism story the "Coronation of the King."

- C. It is significant to note that after Jesus was declared by John the Baptist to be the Messiah, the next event in his life was a time of temptation in the desert.
 - 1. The next event in his life was not the Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem, where thousands gathered to shout "Hosanna" in his presence.
 - 2. After his coronation as king, Jesus faced a time of temptation.
 - 3. When you succeed in a big way, you can expect a time of testing to follow soon afterward.

- D. Another thing I want you to realize about temptation is that it often attacks you where you are most vulnerable.
 - 1. Why did Satan say this? Because he knew that Jesus was hungry.
 - 2. He knew that the idea of eating food was the most tempting thought he could put in Jesus' mind.

3. Here's a fact of life: Temptation doesn't hit you where you're strong; it hits you where you're weak.
4. Jesus was at the point of starvation, and he didn't give in.

II. Understand it.

- A. Matthew tells us that the devil took Jesus to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple, and then he said, (v. 6) *"If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down."*
 1. Then, notice what Satan did next. He quoted Scripture at Jesus. He said, (v. 6) *"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.'";*
 2. And there was an unspoken implication, *"Or do you really believe God will take care of you? Maybe he won't, if you're not really the Messiah.";*
 3. In essence, we can all be tempted with the idea of doing something bad in order to get something good....
 4. Satan tempted Jesus to jump from the temple in order to prove to the world that he was God's anointed Messiah.
- B. Another thing I want you to notice about temptation is that it often promises what God has already provided.
 1. Matthew tells us that Satan took Jesus to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and said, (v. 9) *"All this I will give to you if you bow down and worship me.";*
 2. God had already declared Jesus to be King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
 3. In fact, the book of Colossians says that it was Jesus who created the world. This is his world, and yet, Satan offered it to him.
 4. He can promise you the world, but he can't give you the world, because it really isn't his to give.