

## 20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 44 (October 29-November 4, 2017)

This week, we will identify the three categories of temptations and begin to explore the challenges of dealing with the world, the flesh and the devil.

**Sunday**, October 29 (read Matthew 4:1-4)

*The tempter came to Him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."  
(Matthew 4:3)*

I want to look at the temptations Satan offered to Jesus, because they include every **category** of allurements we will ever face. The devil has only one question: "Did God really say?" (Genesis 3:1), so all temptations will try to get us to violate God's written Word. **All** of his enticements can fit into one of three categories (**pleasure, popularity and power**). In today's text, Satan tries to get Jesus to satisfy His physical hunger by performing a miracle for His own **pleasure**. This is a much larger trap than most people realize. The curse placed on man as a result of his sin is that "by the sweat of your brow you will eat your food" (Genesis 3:19). The word "food" is rendered "bread" in the King James Version. In other words, Satan is trying to get Jesus to **bypass the curse** by producing bread without labor. The devil knows that Jesus can lift the curse only by dying on the cross, spelling defeat for his evil agenda. The Lord sees through Satan's tactic and refuses to shortcut the plan God has laid out for Him; instead, He quotes Scripture to refute him (v. 4).

**Monday**, October 30 (read Matthew 4:5-7)

*Then the devil took Him to the holy city and had Him stand on the highest point of the temple.  
(Matthew 4:5)*

If Jesus would only make a public show of His powers, He would be instantly accepted by the masses. At least, that is Satan's reasoning as he appeals to the Lord to take another shortcut, this one to **popularity**. The devil even quotes Scripture to make the temptation seem like a Biblical concept (v. 6). Jesus is not interested in turning His (or your) ministry into a public show. Many ministries are so hi-tech that the production gets more praise than God Himself. The Lord knows that hi-tech productions and counterfeit miracles attract huge crowds, but that has never been **His** agenda. Instead, He wants you to know the "also" verses that put His Father's Words into the proper context (v. 7). Beware of a ministry that appeals only to sight and sound. The devil operates in these areas while God operates in the area of **faith**.

**Tuesday**, October 31 (read Luke 4:5-8)

*And he (Satan) said to Him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to." (Luke 4:6)*

Few Christians seem to understand that Satan is the "god of this age." (2 Corinthians 4:4). These believers wonder why there is so much evil in our world. They don't understand why Jesus calls the devil the "prince of this world" (see John 14:30). In this text, Satan is offering Jesus a crown without a cross and **power** without pain. The Lord has no interest in any offer that makes **Him** king while leaving mankind lost in their sins, so He once again quotes Scripture to refute Satan (v. 8). From the very beginning, the Lord is aware that His death, alone, can pay the horrible price for the sins of mankind. He rejects all of Satan's shortcuts to **pleasure, popularity and power**; instead, He goes to the cross to pay a debt He did not owe because we owed a debt we could not pay!

**Wednesday**, November 1 (read Galatians 1:3-9)

*But even if we or an angel from Heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! (Galatians 1:8)*

Paul thought the Galatians clearly understood his message of salvation, the one that declares the Lord's victory over Satan and his temptations (v. 3-5). He is astonished (as I am) that his listeners have returned to accept the teachings of their politically correct worldview (v. 6). In the world in which we live, the worldview is molded by the sin nature, not by the Word of God. As I have often said, the government labels the teachings of Scripture as "hate speech." Paul says emphatically that no one, not even an angel, can alter the message of the Word of God (v. 8-9). Woe to those in our generation who make a living by changing the Bible to suit the itching ears of listeners (see 2 Timothy 4:3)!

**Thursday**, November 2 (read John 16:29-33)

*"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)*

At this point in our studies, I hope you realize that Jesus is omniscient (all knowing) and is not blown away by our questions of doubt (v. 29-30). The Lord then foretells the disciple's upcoming desertion, fulfilled when they ran away and left Him all alone in the garden, as well as all alone on the cross. However, except for His final three hours on the cross when His Father turned away (Matthew 27:45-46), Jesus was never alone without the presence and power of the Father and the Spirit. Today, as He observes our failure to stand up against the existing worldview, I can't help but think that He might feel abandoned just as He did when His disciples fled (v. 31-32). He warned us that we would not be accepted in this world, but He reminds us that He has overcome the same world that is rejecting Him (v. 33).

**Friday**, November 3 (read 2 Corinthians 10:3-5)

*For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. (2 Corinthians 10:3)*

Jesus teaches that, "the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light" (Luke 16:8). That's why we are taught to use **spiritual** weapons (prayer, etc), not worldly methods, in the inevitable warfare we will face. If we fight by the weapons of this world, we will lose! Most of today's protesters fight the darkness (as they see it), but Christians are told to shine the light, an act that makes darkness flee (v.3-4). In order to be effective in our spiritual warfare, we must renounce, not only our sins, but also our thoughts and motives that are not in line with the Word of God (v. 5). We should be so busy in our pursuit of Jesus that we have little or no time to organize protests against the world. In the days ahead, you will be glad you understand how to win the victory!

**Saturday**, November 4 (1 John 5:1-5)

*Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. (1 John 5:5)*

I am using this passage to conclude the teachings on the current worldview versus the Biblical worldview. Jesus always ties love for Him with obedience (v. 2-3; see John 14:15). His commandments should never be a burden to us, because they are all given for our benefit. The only way we can win the victory over the world and its values is to live in obedience to the Word of God. In the beginning of our new life in Christ, we know very little about His teachings other than the fact that we are sinners who deserve death and that He offers us the gift of life (Romans 3:23, 6:23). As we obey what we already know, He teaches us more and more truth until we can stand up against the politically correct worldview by quoting the Word of God. My goal in preaching, as well as in sending 207 daily Scripture texts and in writing weekly devotions is to teach you to live your lives with a Biblically correct worldview. You will be glad you did when you stand in His presence to begin eternity!