

## Tempted (Pt. 3) – Submitting To God’s Will

### Introduction

Good morning Turning Point! Hope you have had a good week and are blessed of the Lord today. I know winter is upon us and there is a temptation to stay in bed on Sunday’s but I want to urge you to make the extra effort to be in the House of God.

Today is the 3<sup>rd</sup> part of a 3 part series called, “Tempted.” This series has revolved around Matthew 4:1-11 where Jesus is led into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan. We have looked at what these temptations were and how Jesus overcame them. Today we will look at the final temptation brought by Satan in Matthew 4:8-11

*Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 9 "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." 10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" 11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.*

### (ME)

A few weeks ago I came to the church to pray. My mind was filled with all kinds of issues and circumstances; so, I just needed to pray through them. One of the things weighing heavy on my mind was the state of this church. The Lord has blessed us with material things: a new building, chairs, a community life centre, music equipment and more. I thank God for these blessings but as the Pastor I

also recognize that with every blessing comes responsibility – as it should be! However, we have not seen an increase of new members, we have had no baptisms this year and only six people have received the Holy Ghost.

As I was praying the Lord spoke to me very plainly about a few things that need correcting. I won't go into detail but I will share with you what the Lord talked to me about - me. Basically the Lord impressed in my heart this question, "Are you tired of doing it yourself, yet?" My nature is to do – to do everything – to try and control everything. Unfortunately this has led me to a place where I have not allowed others to have the opportunity to minister or allow God to use their unique gifts and talents to bless this church. I have had to repent of this and the Lord is beginning to work by helping me to see the great ministry many of you possess.

In reality what I have done is tried to be lord and lead in such a way that God had no room to operate. In other words I have fallen for the temptation to rule my own life and the life of this church instead of allowing God to rule.

But I know I am not alone in my actions this morning. All of us have an area in life where we try to lead instead of allowing God to lead. What is that area for you?

**(YOU)**

- Is God the Lord of your career?
- Is God the Lord of your education?
- Is God the Lord of your finances?
- Is God the Lord of your possessions?
- Is God the Lord of your home?
- Is God the Lord of the way you raise your children?

- Is God the Lord of your marriage?

You may be asking, “What do you mean, Lord?” Lord is not just another title for Jesus but it means someone who has authority, power or influence. Does Jesus have authority, power of influence in your decisions, your career, your finances, and etc.?

I could list a thousand things this morning. Basically what I am trying to say to you is this, “Is there any part of your life where you have put up a DO NOT TRESPASS sign?” What part of your life have you allowed the devil to tell you that God has no business being a part of? What part of your life have you told God, “I will control this part, Jesus, and when I need you I’ll give you a call!”

There is one thing we have to get straight this morning. We CANNOT make Jesus the Lord of anything. HE IS ALREADY THE LORD OF LORDS! What you and I have to do is “submit” our will to His Lordship. As the songwriter said, “If He’s not Lord **of** all then He’s not Lord **at** all.”

(TRANSITION) As odd as this may sound when we read Matthew 4:8-11 what we are seeing is the devil trying to tempt Jesus (the human) to take charge and take control of this situation instead of letting God be in control. He offers Jesus the whole world if He will just push God out of the picture.

**(GOD)**

*Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. (Matthew 4:8)*

Whenever I read this verse I kind of laugh to myself. The very first word strikes me in a humorous way, “again.” Remember Jesus has been in the desert going on 40 days and during this whole time the devil is working Him over with temptations. I don’t believe the devil came and tempted Jesus then went away until the next temptation. No! He was there talking, pushing and tempting for the entire 40 days. He had already lost two opportunities to get Jesus to fall and now Matthew says, **again!**

Last week we saw how the devil took Jesus to the top of the Temple and from there Jesus could see the city of Jerusalem. In this temptation the devil takes Jesus to the top of the mountain and shows Him, “the world and its splendor.” Then he says,

*"All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." (Matthew 4:9)*

What is the devil trying to give to Jesus? It is, “the world and its splendor.” Try to picture the scene in your mind. They are on the top of the mountain and somehow, somehow the devil shows Jesus not just the kingdom of Israel but also of the whole world; and he shows Jesus all the great glory and splendor. There is one question that we have to ask ourselves when reading this verse, “Does the world and its splendor belong to devil or to God?” Is all of this the devils to give away?

(It would be like me saying, “I am going to give you Bro. Clive’s keyboard.” Is it mine to give away?)

This is not a simple question to answer. On one hand we could say, no. Jesus is the Creator of all things, which makes Him the owner of all things – including the

world. However, the Bible informs us that for a time the devil has been given some control...

- John 12:31, 14:30 & 16:11 calls the devil the “prince” or “ruler” of “this world.”
- Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 4:4 – *The god of this age [world] blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ...*
  - The devil is called the god of the world or age (time).
- Hebrews 2:14 tells us that Christ shared in our humanity in order to overcome the one *who holds the power of death-that is, the devil*

So does the devil have the authority to give away the kingdoms of this world and its splendor? **Well, it's like this; the devil has no power or authority other than what is given to him either by God or by us!** When we fail to allow Jesus to be the Lord then our lord is the devil. On the other hand, if we surrender all aspects of our life to Jesus then He becomes Lord and the devil loses control and has nothing to offer us! I like what one commentator said,

*The prince of this world is Satan, an angel who rebelled against God. Satan is real, not symbolic, and is constantly working against God and those who obey Him...Satan is powerful, but Jesus is much more powerful. Jesus' resurrection shattered Satan's deathly power. To overcome Satan we need faithful allegiance to God's Word, determination to stay away from sin, and support of other believers.<sup>1</sup>*

Look at how Jesus demonstrates His authority over Satan (v. 10).

*Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"* (Matthew 4:10)

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<sup>1</sup> Life Application Bible, pg. 1769. Notes on John 12:31

Jesus in His humanity was tempted to push God to the side and do His own thing. He was tempted to try and take over – take control – take authority but He did not give way to this temptation. He made a choice to submit His flesh to the will of God and not to the will of Satan. Jesus chose to remember that He was sent into this world to SAVE IT – NOT TAKE IT OVER! He chose God’s plan and not His own. He chose to worship God by obeying the plan of God!

**(WE)**

You see folks Satan can only offer you what you and I what we are willing to take or whatever we are willing to surrender too. The Apostle Paul explained this to the church at Rome...

*“Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey –whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness. (Romans 6:16)*

The devil has power over us when we bow down and worship him? I know what some of you are thinking, “I don’t worship the devil! I am not a Satan worshiper!” Folks, when we were born again of water and Spirit we were set free! But part of that freedom is to continue to choose who we will serve: God or the devil.

When we obey sin – we worship the devil – we live in bondage! When we obey righteousness (doing right things) - we worship God – we live in freedom! This thing called “living for God” is a merely getting up everyday and choosing whom we will serve. If you serve Satan then he will be able to offer you the world and we will fall for the temptation and live in bondage. If, on the other hand, we

choose to serve God then Satan has no power over our lives and cannot fool us with the trappings or the lustful things of this world.

We have to make a decision as a body of believers: we will choose God's plan over man's plan. We will choose to do the right things no matter what the cost.

Satan will offer this church and its members all kinds of reasons to give up on God's leading and take charge of everything themselves. We have hundreds of churches in this city that are no longer led by the Spirit but have given into the latest trends and doctrines. Churches that survive on the personality of a preacher instead of the life giving energetic flow of the Spirit.

We will not become one of those churches. We will not become a Sunday social gathering place. We will stand against the temptation to let our flesh rule and we will prevail over Satan because JESUS IS THE LORD OF THIS CHURCH!

### **(YOU)**

Will you help this church to resist the temptation? You ask, "How can I do that? How can I help?" Well it's this simple: MAKE HIM THE LORD OF YOUR LIFE! Someone say, "Pastor, how do I do that?" I'm glad you asked.

I want you to imagine that your heart is your home. If Jesus is to be Lord of your life then you have to let him into your home (heart). You do this one room at a time.

1. **Let Him Into Your library** – in other words let Jesus take a look at the books, magazines, videos, television shows and computer websites you look at. Ask yourself this question, "Can Jesus watch this with me?" Or would I be embarrassed if Jesus looked at what I look at or listen too.

2. **Let Him Into Your Dining Room** – what are those things you desire more than Jesus? What are the things you want to eat more than the bread of life? Job, career, education – these things are important but they are not what keeps you alive.
3. **Let Him Into Your Family Lounge** – how are your relationships with your family members. Are there some things you need to ask forgiveness for? Are there things you need to forgive? Jesus sees us when we fight and complain, when we steal from our mother’s purse or from our neighbor’s garden. Would Jesus be comfortable sitting in your lounge or would He be concerned about your family relationships.
4. **Let Him Into Your Workshop** – does Jesus have any say at all in your working decisions? Do people at your workplace or school know that you are a Christian? Have you allowed Jesus to be a vital part of how you do your work for His glory?
5. **Let Him Into Your Office** – all of us have a place in our home where we take care of financial matters. We balance our accounts, go over bills, talk about finances, etc. Let me ask you, “Does Jesus have influence over your cheque account, your savings account, or the money you have tucked away in a jar?” Do you spend more on things to satisfy your personal wants and desires but are unwilling to submit your finances to the leadership of Christ?<sup>2</sup>

There is an old song that goes like this.

*I surrender all, I surrender all*

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<sup>2</sup> Based on the book by, Robert Boyd Munger, *My Heart – Christ’s Home*

*All to thee my blessed savior,*

*I surrender all.*