

Sermon on Mark 1:12-13 The Temptation of Jesus

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Short recap of Phillip's sermon last week regarding the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

1. We observe that Jesus recognized ministry of John by submitting himself to John's Baptism.
2. We also recognize that by being baptized in water Christ was setting the example for all who would follow Him to also be water baptized as a profession of faith.
3. We understand from the Gospels that there is a baptism of the Holy Spirit subsequent (coming after) the Holy Spirit given at the time of salvation.
4. This baptism of the Holy Spirit is given by God to empower us to live the supernatural life He has called us to live.

Setting the Stage

Immediately v12

Here in Mark, the word "immediately" is used 40 times. Mark is wanting to convey how much Christ is doing throughout His ministry on earth by using this term over and over again.

It also helps us realize that there was nothing that Christ was able to do once He had been baptized as it was the Spirit's desire for Him to be taken out to the wilderness so that He might go through the temptation. Before Jesus' ministry began, before Jesus did any miracles, preached any message, called any disciples, he was tempted in the wilderness by Satan.

Impelled V12

Different translations: KJV = driveth, NKJV = drove, NLT = Compelled

Different authors in parallel passages: Matthew 4:1 (Led up G321), Luke 4:1 (Led (G71))

Luk 20:15 NASB - "So they ***threw him out*** of the vineyard and killed him. What, then, will the owner of the vineyard do to them?"

Jhn 9:34-35 NASB - They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you teaching us?" So they **put him out**. Jesus heard that they had **put him out**, and finding him, He said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

Jhn 12:31 NASB - "Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be **cast out**."

The idea of this verse is that we understand that Jesus was not being led of His own desire to be tempted nor of His eagerness to face the devil but that the Holy Spirit, who had descended upon him, was leading him and he being submissive obeyed.

Why does Mark record this for us?

1. That we may recognize one way in which the Spirit of God works in those within whom he dwells.
2. That we may understand the urgency with which the Spirit desired to accomplish the task that needed to take place in the wilderness.

Use example from my own life where felt the Spirit "compelling" me to go and ask someone to forgive me.

This is not the same as what happens to Philip in Acts 8:39 where it says that he was "snatched away" by the spirit of the Lord.

Into the wilderness v12

There are many who believe that Jesus was tempted near Jericho in the mountains and hill country.

Temptation of Jesus v13

Comparison of this passage with the other Gospel's accounts

Luke 4 gives us a much more in-depth look at the temptation of Christ as does Matthew 4. John however does not record this specific event.

Significance of the 40 days

Moses was on the mountain of God for 40 days and 40 nights at two separate times receiving the Ten Commandments. Exodus 24:18 & Exodus 34:28

Elijah was strengthened by the miraculous food God gave by the hand of angels and he walked in that strength for 40 days. 1 Kings 19:8

The number 40 appears 158 times in the KJV and according to biblestudy.org and other bible scholars, most of these occurrences symbolize a period of testing, trial, or probation.

With the wild beasts

This I believe to mean that there were no other human beings with Jesus during his temptation. Some believe that Mark mentions this to show the great danger that he was in or on the opposite side of the coin, to show how he was “with” the wild beasts. Meaning that he had a harmonious relationship with the animals even in the midst of his temptation.

Ministering Angels

Why would Jesus need angels ministering to Him after His temptation?

1. If the temptations were so great that the writer of Hebrews says He was “tempted in every way like we are, yet without sin”, then the 40 days of Christ being in the wilderness and tempted by satan were very difficult and trying ones. I personally believe that the angels were ministering to Jesus the man.

Why was Jesus tempted?

1. It shows the great love of God

Heb 4:14-16 NASB - Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Here in these verses God specifically says that Jesus can sympathize with all of our temptations and weaknesses because He was tempted in all things as we are.

It was possible that Christ could have come to this earth and not be tempted and still fulfill the requirements of the Law and become a propitiation for our sin. However God chose to have Christ experience the temptations of this life for the purpose of sympathizing with us.

Most of us, would never want to willingly put ourselves through a major car accident where we become a quadriplegic simply for the purpose of being able to identify with other quadriplegics and the sufferings they go through. Yet, this is what Christ has done for each of us, and that is love.

2. The propitiation of Christ would be incomplete if he was not because He would not be a “faithful” High Priest.

The reconciliation that Christ made for us would not have been complete if He had not experienced the same temptations that we do. As a High Priest, he could not accurately represent us before God Almighty with the atonement for our sins without having first identified with our weakness in the temptation to sin.

Heb 2:17-18 NASB - Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

He had to be made like us in order for the propitiation to be acceptable by God and being “made like us” includes the experience of temptation.

In Heb 2:17 Christ is spoken of as the High Priest who in the fashion of the OT sacrifices gave Himself to hiláskesthai (pres. inf. of hiláskomai [in the KJV it is translated "to make reconciliation for the sins of the people"], to cause God to be propitious or merciful toward sinful man). What Christ did in sacrificing Himself for our sins showed Him to be merciful (eleémōn [G1655]) and faithful (pistós [G4103]). His sacrifice as the God-Man satisfied God's justice so that, instead of God rightly demonstrating His wrath toward sinful man (Rom 1:18; Rom 5:8-10), He demonstrated His mercy. Christ is the High Priest who offers Himself, becoming at once both victim and priest, thus satisfying the justice of God and at the same time procuring forgiveness of sins whereby reconciled man is offered access to and communion with God.

- Spiros Zodhiates on “propitiation”

This becoming victim + priest would not have been possible if the human nature and the divine nature were in any way split. However because He was fully God and at the same time fully man, it was necessary for Him to go through difficulties, trials, and temptations if He were to truly be our High Priest.

All their hope Was in his “fidelity” to the great office which he had undertaken (That of High Priest). If he were faithful, all would be safe; if he were unfaithful, all would be lost. Hence, the necessity that he should enter fully into the feelings, fears, and dangers of man; that he should become one of the race and be identified with them, so that he

might be qualified to perform with faithfulness the great trust committed to him. - Albert Barnes

3. So that He would be able to come to our aid.

Heb 2:18 NASB - For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

"That is why bad people, in one sense, know very little about badness. They have lived a sheltered life by always giving in. We never find out the strength of the evil impulse inside us until we try to fight it: and Christ, because He was the only man who never yielded to temptation, is also the only man who knows to the full what temptation means—the only complete realist (p. 142)." Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis

Even if you were to find someone who had or was struggling in the same areas as you, that person would not be able to identify with you like Christ would. No one else could sympathize with you more than Christ can. Therefore, Christ is the one who can best provide you with the aid you need in overcoming temptation.

What does it mean to give aid? It means to give help or relief to. To give assistance.

The picture I get in my mind is Jesus coming alongside us and carrying us or wrapping His arms around us to help us through.

IDEA: Entertain the idea of using boxes with words of specific sins written on them and have volunteers be "weighed down" by them. Help the Up for the sake of example.

How do we apply this?

Because these Scriptures teach us that Jesus was tempted in all things and because of those temptations He is able both to sympathize and come to our aid:

1. There is no temptation or sinful struggle that you are dealing with now that Jesus cannot identify with.
 - a. (i.e. Lust, Pornography, homosexuality, infidelity, adultery, lying, greed, rebellion, drugs, suicide, depression, bulimia, anorexia, fear, anxiety, etc.)
2. No matter if we have just recently began to be tempted in these ways or if we have wrestled with these temptations for many years, perhaps some of them becoming "besetting sins", Christ is still able to come to our aid and help us overcome.

3. As Matthew Henry rightly says, Jesus was tempted so that we might know that it is not a sin to be tempted.
 - a. This is one of the particular attacks that the enemy makes against us. He wants us to believe that the temptation itself is apart of the sin and that once we are tempted, it is impossible for us to resist. We associate shame and guilt if we experience the temptation, the feelings that should be associated with the sin, so since we have experienced that which is associated with sin, we feel we must give in.
4. Jesus was walking in the power of the Holy Spirit and it is only by living in the power of the Holy Spirit that we can overcome.

Gal 5:16 NASB - But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

1Co 10:13 NASB - No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

Jesus is thus able to alleviate the sufferer. In all our temptations and trials let us remember:

(1) That he suffered more - infinitely more - than we can do, and that in all our sorrows we shall never reach what he endured. We enter no region of trial where he has not gone beyond us; we tread no dark and gloomy way where he has not gone before us.

(2) That he is to us "a brother," for he "is not ashamed to call us brethren." He had a nature like ours; he condescended to appear as one of our race, with all the innocent propensities and passions of a man. What matchless condescension! And what an honor for us to be permitted to address him as an "older brother," and to know that he feels a deep sympathy in our woes!

(3) Let us then, in all times of affliction, look to him. Go not, suffering Christian, to philosophy (or to psychology I would add); attempt not to deaden your feelings by the art of the Stoic; but go at once to the Saviour - the great, sympathizing High Priest, who is able to succour you - and rest your burdens on him.

- Albert Barnes