

“The Temptations of the Lord Jesus”

“Then the devil left him, and angels came and began ministering to his needs.” (Matthew 4:11)

It is important to notice that in this account of the temptations of the Lord Jesus, our Lord meets each temptation the same way, with the same weapon. It is the same weapon that is available to us all when faced with tests and temptation. The Lord Jesus retreated immediately behind the Word of God. The Lord didn't face Satan with His power, even though He could ask for 12 legions of angels. He didn't use His power to command Satan, and neither should you command him. The minute the Lord Jesus used the Word, the battle ceased, the argument ended. This is very important. Our continuing struggle with temptation comes because we are so reluctant to believe and to take our stand on God's revelation. Do you have a plan to know more of the Word of God, so you can be victorious in the temptations of your life?

Temptation is the feeling of the force of the devil's alluring lie. We are tempted to believe that we will gain something by this action so powerfully presented. We quickly adopt a thought or attitude, because we think it is our own, from ourselves and we wouldn't sabotage ourselves, would we? We think if we don't do this thing, something good is going to pass us by — we're going to lose something valuable.

But when we retreat to what God says is the truth about that which we are tempted, we discover immediately the end of the struggle. Satan leaves us alone, at least for a little while. The way Jesus faced His temptation is the way each of His disciples should confront temptation, not with our weak will power, but with the power of the Word of God himself. When Satan finds himself up against the confidence one has in God's Word, Satan turns tail and runs.

A pastor repeated three truths from this powerful passage that oftentimes had been a source of deliverance for him during times of daily temptations. I think they are worth repeating here.

- *It is written.* **Proof** enough. God has told us the facts about life.
- *It is finished.* **Provision** enough. On the cross, the Lord Jesus has done all that needs to be done to break the power of temptation in our lives.

- *It is I. **Presence*** enough. His indwelling life within us is constantly available to us in order to break temptation's power.

There are few who seem to step out into this kind of living, this daily practice, but wherever and whenever it is attempted, the Spirit of God begins to shape one's life in new ways. Not that life becomes suddenly spectacular and people go around doing miracles, but in the quiet, daily experience of life, in the decisions that had some temptation and decisions that commonly come moment by moment. Using the Word of God in times of temptations, big or small, produces a quiet trust in the wisdom of God. Things begin to work out in unexpected ways, with unusual results. Extraordinary things follow ordinary activity, as God begins to work in his disciple. The Spirit of God using the Word of God becomes the underpinning of life decisions that produce experiential peace. Our Lord demonstrated this truth for us. As His disciples, we ought to walk in His ways.