

Matthew 4:1-11

We are going to be spending the next 3 weeks looking at this passage of Scripture in Matthew. What we are going to see is...

1. **The Battle.** Through the battle that he endured, Jesus will teach us that we must expect to endure a similar battle.
2. **The Weapons.** And through the weapons that he used, Jesus will teach us the means through which we can triumph.
3. **The Victory.** Through the victory that he won, Jesus will teach us that we, too, can be victorious.

We begin this morning by looking at the battle Jesus endured.

READ/PRAY

There are three main things that I want us to see in this text, as we consider the battle that took place.

I. This Battle was Spirit Led v1-2

Sometimes the Spirit leads you into the wilderness.

1. Luke says he was lead around for 40 days being tempted (tested).
2. Luke 4:1-2 *Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness 2 for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry.*
3. Sometimes the Spirit leads you into the wilderness and life is not all roses

James 1:13 *Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.*

1. God never tempts anyone!
2. But he can lead you into the wilderness where you will be tempted by the devil!
 - a. But He has our good in mind!
 - b. James 1:2-3 *Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*
 - c. 1 Peter 4:12-13 *Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.*

Sometimes the Spirit leads you to the mouth of the lion.

1. Imagine yourself separated from human society, thrown alone into the depths of the wilderness, surrounded by wild animals, deprived of all nourishment, with the devil himself at your side setting out one snare after another, and all of this goes on for forty days and forty nights.
2. Sometimes the Spirit leads you right to the mouth of the lion.
3. Consider Job!

II. This Battle was Spiritual v3

This was a spiritual battle.

1. Let us not forget, there is a spiritual world!
2. There are glorious beings that would take our breath away at this moment if we saw them
3. And there are evil beings that would horrify us if they were to appear before our eyes.

We often miss the reality that this was a spiritual battle.

1. Since God was present in the flesh
2. We assume that Satan was there in the flesh as well
3. Even if he was, it was still a very spiritual battle.
 - a. A battle between good and evil
 - b. A battle between God and Satan
 - c. A battle between the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness

The Kingdom of Darkness sought to...

A. Destroy Jesus

Matthew 2:16-18

1. This is a reference to Jeremiah 31:15 written around 600 years earlier.
2. Jeremiah prophesies that Rachel's corpse will be so disturbed by her children being taken into captivity in Babylon that she will awaken and weep from her tomb (obviously figuratively).
3. The full fulfillment of this prophecy however is found here however.
 - a. Herod destroys all the male children under 2 in Bethlehem!
 - b. He is out to get Jesus, and he will take anyone out that stands in the way
 - c. In reality this is the work of the devil
 - d. Abortion....how many have been cut off by Satan!!!!

B. Discredit Jesus

1. If Jesus fails, we all fail.
 - a. The biggest ministry ever is about to begin!
 - b. The devil is going to come at him with 100%.
2. The three temptations
 - a. Temptation 1 v3
 - b. Temptation 2 v5-6
 - c. Temptation 3 v8-9
3. Jesus was tempted in all ways. We see every effort of the enemy focused there, exhausting in turn all the resources and methods he possesses.
 - a. Mark 1:12-13 *Immediately the Spirit impelled Him to go out into the wilderness. 13 And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him.*
 - b. Luke 4:13 *When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time*
 - c. Heb 4:15 *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

C. Defeat Jesus

1. At the Crucifixion
2. Satan enters Judas
3. When Judas kisses the face of Jesus, what is really happening is, Satan kisses the face of God!
4. Genesis 3:15 *And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.*

We are involved in a spiritual war and this battle is continuously raging.

Ephesians 6:12 *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

III. This Battle is Serious

Satan tried to destroy Jesus through Herod, discredit Jesus through temptation, and defeat Jesus at the cross.

1. Now, he wants to devour the followers of Jesus.
2. This is serious!

The devil isn't playing. It seems that most of our life is becoming about playing...

1. Playing sports or watching others play
2. Playing video games
3. Playing the stocks
4. Playing politics
5. Playing church! etc. etc.

Satan isn't playing, but he is glad when we are.

1. 1 Peter 5:8 *Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*
2. Temptation for the Christian is not simply about us and our own little kingdoms; it's about an all out attack of the Devil and all his demons on the kingdom of Christ and every single person who associates with Christ.
3. The evil one is persistently plotting to subtly entice you with sin and ultimately to bring destruction upon your soul.
4. How does he do it?
 - a. James 1:14-15 *But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death*
 - b. Desire
 - c. Disobedience
 - d. Death

Discussion Questions:

1. What did you learn about God in this sermon and in the biblical texts used? About Christ? About the Holy Spirit?
2. What did you learn about yourself in this sermon and in the texts used?
3. Were there any clear promises or commands in the biblical texts used?
4. What is the hardest truth that stands out to you from this message or the verses referenced?
5. What is the most impactful point or statement from the sermon?
6. How can you respond to this message?