

Tested and Tempted - Part#2

Tested & Tempted Part #1:

Last week we talked about *Jesus' temptation* to turn stones into bread and we learned that we could **depend on a dependable God.**

Matthew 4 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

³ The tempter came to him and said, **"If** you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

⁴ Jesus answered, **"It is written:** 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

- In the time of His weakened state the enemy comes and says, **IF...this is a word of doubt!**
- Look at the words, **"It is written..."** Jesus takes the **seed of doubt** the tempter is trying to plant in His mind and battles it with an **absolute fact!**

Part #2: God Is Able To Protect

Today is the second part of a 3-part series we are talking about at "My Church", entitled, **"Tested & Tempted."** We are looking at **Matthew 4:1-11.**

This morning we will look **specifically** at **Matthew 4:5-7**

Matthew 4:5-7 – NIV - ⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.

⁶ **"If** you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. **For it is written:**

“**He will** command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that **you will not** strike your foot against a stone.”

⁷ Jesus answered him, “It is also written: **‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’**”

****One thing I have had a hard time getting used to is ***all the security***.

I realize all of these things are supposed to make us feel safer, **but do they?**

What about you?

Do you ever feel **unprotected? Insecure? Vulnerable?**

Do you always **feel like you are on guard** against “someone” but your not sure whom that “someone” is?

- I am talking about **a gripping uneasiness that causes us not to trust!!!**
- We all realize there is a **crime problem in Springfield** and we are all aware of the number of **thefts, overdoses and violent crimes**.

But who can we count on to protect us from all of these dangers?

We are not alone in feeling unprotected or insecure; we are not alone in emotional pain of feeling unprotected.....

- ***Jesus*** has **walked in our shoes!!!**
- This is evident during this ***2nd temptation*** recorded by Matthew...

Reading the account of ***Jesus’ wilderness temptation*** we will find **one word used over and over** by the devil – **IF**.

Look at what the devil says to Jesus...

“IF you are the Son of God...throw you yourself down..”

- The devil had taken Jesus up to the highest point of the Temple in Jerusalem.
- The Temple was the tallest building in Jerusalem.
- From the top of the Temple Jesus could see the whole city of Jerusalem.

Then the devil does something very clever (or at least he thinks it is clever)...

HE BEGINS TO QUOTE SCRIPTURE TO JESUS...look at this...

Matthew 4:6b - *For it is written:*

*“He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that **you will not** strike your foot against a stone.”*

The devil is quoting from Psalm 91

Psalm 91:11-12 - (NIV)

¹¹ *For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways;*

¹² *they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.*

There is only one problem with this whole scene.

- **The devil** is taking these scriptures and using them to try and get Jesus to commit sin!
- This is not the first time **the devil has taken the Word of God** and tried to use it against people.

We need only to read **Genesis 3** where **the devil “misquotes” what God said** and then **Eve eats of the forbidden fruit and mankind falls into sin.**

Psalm 91 is a beautiful Psalm about **how God will protect** those who **put their trust in Him.**

It is a Psalm detailing how **God will be a shelter** to those **who will abide in Him...**

Let me read a portion of this Psalm too you:

Psalm 91:9-13 - (NIV) –

⁹ If you say, “**The LORD is my refuge,**”

and you make the Most High your dwelling,

¹⁰ no harm will overtake you,

no disaster will come near your tent.

¹¹ For he will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways;

¹² they will lift you up in their hands,

so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

¹³ You will tread on the lion and the cobra;

you will trample the great lion and the serpent.

The Lord is not telling us **we will never feel** unprotected or insecure...

- These are **natural emotions** we all have because **we live in a world full of danger.**

What God is telling us is this: in times of danger **He will help us!**

- His angels **will guard us** when danger comes our way.

So why would the devil try to use this scripture to tempt Jesus?

Basically the devil is trying to convince Jesus that **God is unable to protect Him in the face of this danger.**

- “**Throw yourself down!**” screams the devil,
- “God will command His angels to protect you.”
- In other words, the devil is saying, “**MAKE GOD PROVE HIMSELF TOO YOU!**”
- **Put GOD to the test** and see if He will do what he says he will do!”

But **Jesus does not fall for this trick** of the devil.

Jesus does exactly what He did to overcome the **1st temptation** – **He confronts the lie with absolute truth from the Word of God.**

Jesus says to the devil... **“Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”**

Jesus pulls from the **Old Testament** book of **Deuteronomy chapter 6.**

- This is a chapter where **God is reminding Israel** of **their responsibility to keep the commandments** and **teach them to the next generation.**
- **He then reminds them** of how **He has led them out of slavery** and **is leading them to a land of promise.**

Remember how **Israel had disobeyed God** and **wander in the Desert for 40 years?**

Well, one day during these **40 years of wandering**, the people were **camping at a place called Rephidim** but **there was no water to be found** (Ex. 17:1).

The people began to fight with one another saying, **“Is the LORD among us or not?”** (Ex. 17:7).

God tells Moses to **take his staff and strike a rock.** When Moses strikes the rock **water comes out** and the people are satisfied.

The Israelites problem was not really water!!!!

Their problem was: They were not sure if God was able to protect them in this place where there was **no water.**

In their insecurity and feeling as if God was not going to protect them –

- THEY DECIDED TO **DEMAND GOD** TO PROVE HISSELF TO THEM!
- THEY PUT GOD **TO THE TEST** –
- AND GOD **WAS NOT VERY HAPPY** ABOUT IT!

It only showed how little Israel trusted God!!!!

So when **Jesus says,** **“Do not put the LORD your God to the test,”**

- He is telling the devil, “**I will trust in God.**
- He is able to protect me.
- He is able to make water come out of a rock.
- If He can do this for Israel in the Desert then
- He will do this for me in this Desert.
- ***He will not fail me – HE IS ABLE TO PROTECT ME!!!***

We see the insecurity of the world all around us.

- * Job losses, financial crashes, banks on the verge of meltdown.
- * War, hunger, famine and more.

We see these things happening and **we are tempted** to say, “**Where is God in all of this?**”

Why doesn't He just show up, snap His fingers and make it go away???

We are asking the same question asked by the Israelites when there was no water, “IS THE LORD AMONG US OR NOT?”

Do not allow the devil to tell you that because suffering exists in the world that God is gone or distant! God is able to protect us.

Remember the words of the Psalm –

Psalm 91:9-10 If you say, “The LORD is my refuge,” and you make the Most High your dwelling, no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent.

There will be times in all of our lives when we are weak (**just as Jesus was**) and **the devil will come** and show us **the world systems** can protect us.

He will say, “**You might as well put your trust in the powers of this world because you just can't trust whether God will show up or not!**”

Close:

But I say, **NO!** I will make my dwelling with the Most High!

I will find my **refuge in the One who is able** to keep me from falling!

What about you?

- Are you ever **tempted** to look around at your circumstances and say, **“Is the Lord among us or not?”**
- Are you ever **tempted** to look at how the world and Christians suffer and say, **“Is the Lord among us or not?”**
- Do you ever look around at the crime and the violence we all are so familiar with and say, **“Is the Lord among us or not?”**

Do you ever just want God to somehow show up and save the day????

Let me assure you this morning that God will protect you – if you abide in Him.

- That **doesn't mean** we will never face dangers
- Or somehow **we will be exempt from the problems of this world.**

It simply means the Lord will be with us when we face danger, uncertainty, insecurity and more.

“Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”

- **The police** will fail to protect us
- **Government** policies will fail to protect us
- **Wealth** will fail to protect us
- **People** will fail to protect us.
- **God is able to protect us!!!!**

What is that one area of your life where you have thought, “I don't know if God is with me in this or not?”

Ladies – maybe you have never experienced the true love of a real father.

- Your dad is not really a dad but a guy who shows up every now and then.
- You feel as if you are somehow unprotected because there is no dad.
- **So the devil whispers**, “Just find protection in the arms of another man.
- Find comfort in the attention men give you and the affection they show you.
- That’s your protection; that’s who will save the day!”

GOD IS YOUR PROTECTOR – HE IS YOUR FATHER.

He will not take advantage of your weakness and exploit your vulnerability. **He will** pull you close to Him and love you the way a Father should love his little girls.

Men – maybe you feel **hopeless** to be a man!

- You feel like you have to **harden your heart** and **act like you don’t care** about things because that is what other men do.
- You may feel that if you show your feelings or demonstrate your worship to God that other will look down on you.

God will protect you!

You can be a man of integrity and authority without being corrupt or abusive.

- **You can have a relationship with God** that sets an example of what men ought to be.
- **Don’t be tempted** to think you are out here alone.

PRAISE TEAM

What is it today that you fear the most?

- What is that one thing you feel as if you cannot be protected from?
- What is that one thing that makes you feel insecure or vulnerable?
- What have others done to you that has caused you to feel unprotected
(raped, molested, manipulated, broke their promise too you.)?

Would you bring that thing to Jesus today and allow Him the opportunity to show you how *He will protect you as you abide in His house.*

Would you make up your mind that this week *when that thing tries to tempt you away from the presence of God:*

You will simply look at it and say, *“Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”*

God Is Able To Protect!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!