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Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

Obedience neither procrastinates nor questions

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

O help us, Lord, to heed Your Word, Its precepts to obey; And give us strength to quench the urge To do things our own way.
—Sper

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

So Samuel said: "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams

(1 Sam 15:22 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", July 23, 1996)

Series: Honoring God

UNIT: Jesus Teaches About True Worship

NEXT WEEK

God Honoring Piety (Matt 6:1-8)

Single-Minded Obedience Matthew 4:1-11

Lesson Background and Introduction

The time of preparation for Jesus' ministry was almost over but not quite. By the point where today's lesson begins, Matthew has told us of the work of John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah (Matthew 3:1-12). John's ministry intersected with that of the Messiah himself at the baptism of Jesus. Done "to fulfil all righteousness" (3:15), Jesus' baptism was a kind of anointing. It showed that He had accepted the task given to Him and that He had the approval of both the Holy Spirit and the Father (3:16, 17). The account of Jesus' temptation as recorded in Matthew 4 gives far more detail than the summary in Mark 1:12, 13. The parallel account in Luke 4:1-13 offers additional insights. The most obvious difference between the accounts in Matthew and Luke is the order in which the temptations are recorded. Luke reverses the second and third from Matthew's order, which is usually understood to be the original. Luke's reason for this change is not immediately apparent. Otherwise, the three accounts agree regarding the historical fact of Jesus' temptations. Use of the term "the holy city" to refer to Jerusalem in today's text reveals that Matthew was rooted in the Jewish faith (compare Matthew 4:5; 27:53 with Nehemiah 11:1; Isaiah 52:1). By contrast, Luke, of Gentile background (implied in Colossians 4:11, 14), never uses that term (contrast Matthew 4:5 with Luke 4:9).

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

In the Wilderness - After Jesus' baptism by John, the Holy Spirit led Jesus out into the barren Judean wilderness. He survived in that desolate place without food or water for 40 days. After the 40 days, Satan taunted Him with three temptations. God used these confrontations with the enemy to demonstrate to believers how to depend on the Lord and His Word in situations of temptation.

Appetite Temptation - Naturally, after an extended period without nourishment, Jesus endured hunger pains. The tempter offered Him bread. Jesus responded with Scripture, boldly telling Satan what His Father has said. God's Word will always be more precious than food.

Tempting God - The second test pulled at the human desire for public approval. Satan, once again, tried to force Jesus to do a supernatural act. He took Jesus up on the highest part of the temple and said if He jumped, angels would catch Him. The devil even quoted part of a psalm, but he twisted the words.

Materialism - The last test attempted to get Jesus to bypass the Cross. Jesus could have power over all the kingdoms of this world if He would just worship Satan, "the god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4, KJV). At this point, Jesus commanded Satan to leave. Immediately God's angels began to minister to Him.

How to Fight - This passage teaches Christians several lessons about being single-minded and obedient. First, if the enemy came after Jesus, surely he will attack Christ's followers. It's naive to think Satan does not exist or he won't cause havoc and harm. The sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, is the Lord's weapon of choice. Jesus repeated in each of these confrontations, "It is written." He defeated Satan's lies with God's truth. It's fruitless to fight or resist this powerful enemy with human intellect, education, or common sense. Scripture is our defense against temptation so we may experience victory over the adversary.

(Adapted from the Echoes Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Obedience During Weaknesses (Matt 4:1-4)

Obedience through the power of the Holy Spirit (1-2)

- Power of hope (Rom 15:13)
- Power to rest faith on (1 Cor 2:5)
- Power that comes through being a part of the kingdom of God (1 Cor 4:20)
- Power to strengthen the inner being (Eph 3:16)
- Power that God gives through the Spirit of power (2 Tim 1:7)

Obedience through being a child of God (3)

- A child that overcomes weaknesses through love (1 John 3:10)
- A child that overcomes weaknesses through freedom given by God (Rom 8:20-21)
- A child that overcomes weaknesses through the righteousness of God (Phil 2:15)
- A child that overcomes weaknesses through the truth of God (1 John 5:18-20)
- A child that overcomes weaknesses through indwelling power of God (1 John 4:4)

Obedience through the power of the God's Word (4)

- Power of the Word to revive the soul (Ps 19:7-8)
- Power of the Word to keep one's life pure (Ps 119:9-11)
- Power of the Word to save the believers (Rom 1:16)
- Power of the Word as the sword of the Holy Spirit (Eph 6:17)
- Power of the Word to provide hope (Rom 15:4)

Obedience Against Pride (Matt 4:5-7)

Obedience through discerning Satan's schemes (5-6)

- Discerning Satan's schemes by forgiving (2 Cor 2:10-11)
- Discerning Satan's schemes through use of the full armor of God (Eph 6:11)
- Discerning Satan's schemes through Jesus' intercession for us (Luke 22:31-32)
- Discerning Satan's schemes through being self-controlled and alert (1 Peter 5:8-9)

Obedience through depending on and trusting God (7)

- Trusting in God and not worrying (John 14:1)
- Trusting in the name of God (Ps 20:7)
- Trusting in God and not fearing man (Ps 56:4)
- Trusting in God, our refuge, at all times (Ps 62:8)
- Trust that must be proved faithful (1 Cor 4:2)
- Trust that relies on God not self (2 Cor 1:9)

Obedience Against Idolatry (Matt 4:8-11)

Obedience through worshipping only God (8-9)

- Worship God only because we are to serve Him only (Deut 6:13)
- Worship God only because we are to have no other gods (Exodus 20:3)
- Worship God only because God is a jealous God (Exodus 34:14)
- Worship God only because He is the only One who can save us (Dan 3:16-18)
- Worship God only because no one can serve more than one master (Matt 6:24)
- Worship of God because He is due it (Ps 29:2)
- Worship of God because He is the creator (Ps 95:6-7)

Obedience through resisting Satan (10)

- Resist Satan by not giving him a foothold (Eph 4:27)
- Resist Satan by putting on the full armor of God (Eph 6:11-13)
- Resist Satan by submitting to God (James 4:7)
- Resist Satan by being alert and self-controlled (1 Thess 5:6)
- Resist Satan by praying that we will not fall into temptation (Matt 26:41)

Obedience through sustainment of God (11)

- God sustains by upholding those who fall (Ps 37:23-24)
- God sustains from birth (Ps 71:6)
- God sustains through providing a willing spirit (Ps 51:12)
- God sustains because He will never forsake His own (Ps 55:22)
- God sustains because He promised to do so (Ps 119:116)
- God sustains because He always finishes what He starts (Phil 1:6)