

Temptation (Genesis 3)

Valleys Family Church Sermon
Stuart Wheatman, Sunday 4th Nov 2012

Intro

- This week we will look at the nature of temptation and see how Satan tempted mankind in the Garden of Eden and how he tries to tempt us in a similar way.
- We will look at how we overcome the enemy.

Read Gen 2:15-17, 3:1-24

Background- Satan either speaking through the serpent or is in the form of a serpent- referred to in Rev as that ancient serpent Rev 12:9. Originally must have had legs as the curse was to crawl on it's belly- around the gates of ancient Babylon were demons in the form of snakes with legs on the brickwork, there were also cherubim type creatures guarding gates in ancient Babylonia, Egypt and Assyria reflecting (distortedly by multiple gods) perhaps memories of the fall here. Here we have the origin of the fall of mankind, Adam & Eve are in paradise, they have all good things, eternal life, sinless, great communion with God, all provision in the garden but how does Satan get mankind to mess up, how does it compare with us today and how can we overcome?

1. Doubting God's word

- **v1 'Has God really said'**
- If Satan can get mankind to doubt God's words then he has a foot in the door to deceive. He tries the same thing today- getting people to doubt the validity and truth of the Bible. Satan uses mockery, disbelieving tones, sarcasm to undermine the Word. He also brings in false teaching, conflict and confusion over what God says to undermine it, however Satan truly does believe the Word of God and every demon.
- *'You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free'- John 8:32.* Hebrew concept of 'knowing' far deeper than ours- used of sexual union- knowing intimately, trustingly knowing, knowing by experience, knowing by means of a loving relationship.
- Jesus overcame the evil one with a scripture each time when tempted in the wilderness (from Deuteronomy). Satan also knows scripture and tried to get Jesus to misapply it, but Jesus KNEW experientially the scriptures and was able to counter the attack, do we?
- **Application-** know that scripture is truth- this is our sword, the sword of the Spirit (Eph 6:17). Learn the scriptures, read them, meditate on them. Believe and trust what God says about you & situations over what Satan would say. Learn to think biblically.
- Satan tries to get us to think that God is being too harsh with us- bends the truth 'every tree in the garden', exaggerates to make God look unfair and prohibitive.
- Satan pretends to be helping us, our best friend. He will try and target us when we are vulnerable. God only wants to bless us- He warns us for our own good as a loving parent would
- *God cannot lie- Heb 6:18- God is light and in Him there is no darkness- 1John 1:5.*
- **Application-** know that God loves you and has your best interests at heart. Eve knew what God had said, she just chose to believe what Satan had said over what God had said- we need to do the opposite and believe what God says.

2. Denial of consequences

- **v4 'You will surely not die'**
- Every action has an equal and opposite reaction. Wages of sin is death.
- In Heb 'dying you will not die'='you most certainly will NOT die'.
- 'Come on just once won't hurt', 'one more time won't hurt', 'you've started now, might as well finish it', 'once more is neither here nor there', 'who will know?', 'who is it hurting?', 'everyone's doing it'
- Sin affects our emotions- it brings misery, depression, shame, guilt, feelings of condemnation, desire to hide from God and others, just as Adam and Eve experienced.
- Sin is addictive- it brings us into bondage. We never have enough and it robs us of true satisfaction.
- Sin affects others- Adam's sin affected all of us. Solidarity of sin- he became our federal head- we became sinners due to him. Our sin affects our families, our friends. Satan wants to spoil our relationships, break up families and churches.
- *Jesus warns about Pharisaical hypocrisy saying 'There is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed'- Lk 12:2.* Revelations about Jimmy Saville have shocked, but he hasn't got away with it- it would have been better for him if it had come out before he died so he could have repented, now he has to face God.
- Satan is a thief- he wants to steal your rewards. We are not saved by our works, however, our works will be rewarded. There is a reward for righteousness here and now and in glory, there is a reward for forgiveness here and now and in eternity. There is a confidence that comes from walking in the light and having a clear conscience- a confidence in prayer, a boldness, an assurance of salvation, a great peace, overflowing joy. However, when a Christian is pursuing sin there is a grating, a disease, a conviction until the situation is sorted.
- What is God flagging up in your life now? What has Satan minimised, but God is right now putting His finger on? Are there blessings you are forfeiting in your life by holding onto something that is only bringing misery to you? Let it go, surrender to God and receive His peace and joy afresh this morning.

3. Distortion of desire

- **v5 'your eyes will be opened, you will be like God'**
- Adam and Eve were expecting great things out of the deal. Grass is greener complex. Hopping the cues in road traffic and in Home Bargains.
- Adam and Eve had everything before they lost it all. The most precious things we have in life are often the things we already have and take for granted until we lose them. Let's learn to cherish the things God has given us, to be thankful for our families and possessions, not craving after what we do not have all the time as the world does. Praise lifestyle.
- In London breakfast TV were shocked that in a survey an increasing number of people valued possessions more than people & had a guest that would only date people with millions, but then followed it with a 'get rich quick' plug for a competition, promising amazing possessions.
- *'Delight yourselves in the Lord & He will give you the desires of your heart' (Ps 37:4). 'Seek first His Kingdom & His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you' (Matt 6:33).*
- Delayed gratification- our society instant gratification- Heb- *'you have need of endurance so that after you have done the will of God you may receive the promise (Heb 10:36).* Faith endures and receives the promise- Abraham given as example in Heb 6- believed that God would bless him and endured- Heb 11 whole list of OT

saints believed and persevered for the promise that comes in eternity- Opening our presents early not good- me & Jon.

- Rope illustration Francis Chan.
- What is Satan tempting you to rush into? What are you living your life for? Is God's kingdom your first priority? What areas are you tempted to feel hard-done in? Give these things to God.

Our action: We overcome through Christ

- **v15 'He shall bruise your head', v21 'God made tunics of skin and clothed them'**
- First Messianic prophecy. Jesus is the promised seed of the woman, later the promise would come to Abraham and his seed (singular). Paul in Gal 3:16 says this 'seed' who was promised is Christ. In Lk 1:55 Mary recognised the seed of Abraham was Christ whom she was carrying.
- *'They overcame him by the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony' Rev 12:11.* It is through the cross of Christ we are victorious over Satan.
- The striking of the heel speaks of Jesus' death for us and the striking of the head speak of Christ's death-blow to Satan on the cross. 'It is finished'- Satan was defeated by Christ on the cross and His victory is our victory. The clothing with skin is a picture of being 'In Christ'- it took the death of an animal for this to happen, but the death of God's Son for our salvation.
- We are either 'in Adam' and defeated or 'In Christ' and victorious- the truth is that when we place our trust in Christ He becomes our federal head- we are 'In Christ' and we are already victorious over the evil one. All of our sin- past, present, future has been laid on Christ and punished in Him- our bill is paid- it's all 'under the blood'.
- Jesus took the curse away from us- even the ground which was cursed – Adam literally means 'red earth'- the ground was cursed with thorns in verse 18, but Jesus took the curse on His brow in the crown of thorns. Refuse the lie that you are a loser, cursed by situation- Jesus took your curse- you are a winner, a champion, an overcomer, victorious in Christ.
- Also the power of sin has been broken- our sinful body was nailed to the cross and is now dead- let's accept this and not resurrect it. All sin is able to be overcome, we are no longer slaves to it.
- *'For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under GRACE.'* – Romans 6:11-14
- *No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. 1Cor 10:13*
- *His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 2Pet 1:3*
- *in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit. Rom 8:4*
- *For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Rom 6:9-11*

i.e. when Jesus died it was as if He was married to sin (our sin) resulting in the death penalty- i.e. death had mastery over Him due to our sins, however now that He has paid the death penalty He is no longer under sin's sway- He belongs to

another- God; in the same way we are to regard ourselves as severed from that relationship with sin and married to another- God. Sin no longer has any authority in our lives- we've been released from that marriage by dying and now we are raised from the dead and married to another- God- so we are to live believing this and not allowing sin to dictate to us anymore, our relationship with sin is severed by death.

Summary

Satan's methods:

- Doubting God's word
- Denial of consequences
- Distortion of desire

Our action:

- We overcome through Christ

Song

Who is there like You?