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## Matthew 4:1-11

Good morning. Today's Scripture text comes from Matthew 4:1-11.

1. "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
2. And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.
3. And the tempter came and said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.'
4. But He answered and said, 'It is written, "MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD."'
5. Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple,
6. and said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, "HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU"; and "ON *their* HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE."'
7. Jesus said to him, 'On the other hand, it is written, "YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO

THE TEST.”

8. Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory;

9. and he said to Him, ‘All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.’

10. Then Jesus said to him, ‘Go, Satan! For it is written, “YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.”’

11. Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and *began* to minister to Him.”

Immediately following His baptism, Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. In this text Jesus received three temptations from the devil. Each one represents a specific type or category of temptation. I John 2:16 lists all that is in the world as “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life.”

The late Don Dwelt, founder of College Press out of Joplin, Missouri put it this way: “The lust of the flesh embraces temptations with regard to food and sex. The lust of the eyes has to do with anything you can buy. And the boastful pride of life is the basis for secular humanism, which provokes God’s wrath.”

Ultimately Satan’s purpose is to have others worship and obey him. In the twentieth century abundant food or starvation has been alternately used to enslave untold

millions politically, and thereby spiritually.

Today sexual sins have caused the downfall and death of most of the human race. Daring, self-willed pride was the devil's original downfall and he continues to propagate his sickness among the ranks of men created in God's image. But most evident of all temptations in our society today is the lust of the eye as seen in materialism.

The last temptation of Christ as given in Matthew's account reads, "Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, 'All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.'"

Here Satan's true colors are revealed. He desires most of all to be worshipped. Materialism, physical wealth and "things," are his bait! Today the devil's ploy has been labeled "the prosperity doctrine."

This doctrine teaches that a person's material wealth and position is the exact reflection of his godliness and spirituality. The more money and things you have, the more God is pleased with you.

If this were true, then Jesus Christ would have been a billionaire. The apostles would have been filthy rich. Instead of denouncing his riches and position in Philippians 2, Paul would have increased his bank accounts and rank as a Pharisee substantially following his conversion.

Jesus specifically stated, "It is harder for a rich man

to enter the kingdom of heaven, than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.” James writes, “Did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom? James 2:5

Now this is not to say that materially wealthy people cannot please the one true God. But they are instructed to build the Lord’s kingdom, not their own “to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share.”

As Jesus confronted the temptation of material riches, so must we. “Then Jesus said to him, ‘Be gone Satan! For it is written, “YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY!”””

How about you? Is your material prosperity a reflection of your service to the god of this world? Does Satan have you worshipping him for trinkets that will someday burn?

Repent. Turn to Jesus and serve Him only!