

The same two gospels that record the genealogies of Christ, also tell of His temptation by Satan in the wilderness.

Can there be any doubt about the seriousness of the eternal issues at stake when learning to fight against temptation? "If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched-- "where 'their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.' " And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched-- "where 'their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.' " And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire-- "where 'their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.' " (Mark 9:44-48)

How long did these temptations last?

Was the sinful nature, the "flesh" of Jesus subject to these trials? Jesus had a human nature, but not a fallen human nature. Nevertheless, that nature was subject to every kind of trial. As the 'second Adam' He was under attack just like the 'first Adam'.

Had the devil assaulted Christ so vehemently at earlier moments in His life?

What part does the Holy Spirit play in this account? Jesus had been "filled" with the Spirit in connection with His baptism. He was "led" by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted. He returned to Galilee in the "power" of the Spirit to begin His ministry (vs. 14).

Why was it necessary for the Lamb of God to be free from sin and blame?

What was at stake for us in this historical event?

### **Three specific temptations which are reminiscent of John's instructions in 1 John 2:15-17.**

- "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." "The lust of the flesh"
- "See all the kingdoms of the world? I will give you all their authority and splendor. I can give them to whomever I wish. Just fall down and worship me." "The lust of the eyes"
- "If you are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. God will protect You with His angels." "The boastful pride of life" "Do something spectacular. Turn heads. Look for fame. Be a celebrity."

### **What can we learn here about fighting life's temptations?**

1. Beware of "small" sinful thoughts. If left unchecked, thoughts will yield to imaginations that will produce acts that will establish habits, producing a way of life, which will result in reaping an eternal destiny. It is much easier to pull the early appearance of the weed than to use the chainsaw and stump grinder later.
2. Pray for a fullness of the Holy Spirit to attend your every moment and movement.
3. Then use the Word of God as the "sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17). Jesus, being in very essence God, could have said anything and it would have been the word of God. He instead quoted Scripture.
4. So expect that as you "resist the devil, he will flee from you" (Jas. 4:7). Maybe not immediately. The "when" is unknown; the "that" is sure. Amazing!
5. Realize how God trains His disciples. The "power" to serve effectively comes through the process of fighting temptations successfully.
6. Be prepared for the "next" time (vs.13). This is no "strange" thing.
7. Remember, "It is a 'good' fight" (1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 4:7). "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, and He delights in His way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the LORD upholds him with His hand. (Psa. 37:23, 24) Keep preaching and believing the Gospel. It, and nothing else, has the power to save.