

Thursday, February 26

Read Matthew 4:1-11. The second temptation was one of testing God presence and more urgently God's protection. The devil utilized scripture to entice Jesus to go to the pinnacle of the Temple and throw himself down...for surely God will protect Jesus through his army of angels. This usages of scripture is a perfect example of scripture being quoted out of context. Jesus throwing himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple would be foolish at the very least and disrespectful of our loving Creator at worst. Jesus once again demonstrates his knowledge of scripture in quoting Deuteronomy 6:16: "Do not put the LORD your God to the test, as you tested him at Massah." What happened at Massah? The Israelites quarreled about the presence of God asking if God is with them, even though God's presence had been demonstrated several times. It's a foolish quarrel just as it is foolish to wonder if God is present to us. As Jesus taught us, we need to be sensible and count the cost of discipleship (Luke 14:25-33). Meditate on these concepts and write your ideas here.

Friday, February 27

Read Matthew 4:1-11. We've arrived at the third and final temptation of Jesus by the devil in the wilderness. This is about power over others; it is about political power used to coerce people. It is about leadership used to be punitive against those who will oppose one's leadership. The Kingdom of God, the Kingdom at the center of Jesus' teachings, is all about servanthood and love, peace and living holy lives. It's about making ourselves available for God's greatest purposes. That fact that Jesus faced this temptation with great strength should inspire us to delve deeper into the ways of our God, our Lord and Savior. Pray to God for that strength and write your thoughts here.

Message Notes February 22, 2026

Christ Challenged *The Trial of Temptation**

- I. "Clickbait" refers to any ____ or _____ with a shocking, salacious or _____ headline and/or photo designed to pique your curiosity and suck you in.
 - A. These headlines usually don't deliver what it offers, and your "click" usually results in a bevy of more _____ and _____ information.
 - B. This kind of baiting is not _____.
- II. Jesus' first enemy, the Devil, tells us that Jesus' first confrontation following his Baptism was _____.
 - A. And Jesus was led into a spiritual battle with the Devil by none other than the _____.
 - B. It turns out that the devil himself is a _____ of clickbait.
 - C. The question is whether Jesus will _____ on any of the devil's _____.
- III. Let's consider the three Clickbait _____ that Jesus' time in the wilderness with the Devil might have generated.
 - A. Our first headline is, "Making _____ out of stones? The shocking dietary revolution that will change your life!"
 1. The devil's first piece of clickbait is to get Jesus to use his _____ to transform stones into bread.
 2. Jesus knew that the devil's temptation was to produce a _____ rather than rely on the _____ source from whom every good thing comes.

- B. The second clickbait headline reads, "Man jumps from incredible height with no _____. You won't believe what happens next!"
1. The devil even tries to bait Jesus by using _____, quoting _____ 91:11-12.
 2. The devil uses this scripture out of _____.
- C. Our third Clickbait Headline is, "The secret to world _____. It's _____ than you think!"
1. First, "All the _____ of the _____" have never really belonged to the devil.
 2. The devil's kingdom is a kingdom of _____; God's is a kingdom of _____.
- D. As we go about our daily lives and especially this Season of Lent, there are plenty of _____ - _____ temptations that cross our paths and our screens every day.
1. Jesus invites us to turn our attention to the _____, to _____ and to his _____.
 2. They're the only clickbait or ads or invitations that really _____!

Daily Devotional Guide

The following is a daily devotional and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

Monday, February 23

The message began with an illustration about "clickbait." Even if you haven't ever heard the word, clickbait, you most likely are familiar with the concept. Sometimes they're called pop-up ads and they are usually in response to something that we have triggered through the use of the internet. These clickbait ads can also be articles that goad you into wasting an hour of your life and not really discovering any useful knowledge. Pastor Jack admitted to falling prey to this tactic in a tabloid. Do you have a "clickbait story?" To what kinds of enticements are you likely to fall prey?" Meditate on these questions and write your thoughts here.

Tuesday, February 24

Read Matthew 4:1-11. Before examining the temptations endured by Jesus, think about your beliefs about the devil or Satan or whatever name you use for an evil entity in creation. What are your earliest concepts of the devil? What name do you use in discussing an evil entity? More important than the name, how do you believe this entity works in the world; in our world? Followers of Christ often talk about experiences of the Holy Spirit. What experience, if any, have you had with an evil entity? Meditate on these thoughts and write your reflections here.

Wednesday, February 25

Read Matthew 4:1-11. The first temptation Jesus experience makes full sense since Jesus was in the wilderness fasting for 40 days and nights. He must have been ravenous. Jesus responded to this first temptation with great strength as he relied on the words of Deuteronomy 8:4: "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." While we need food to sustain us, we actually have deeper needs and desires. This temptation also brings up the spiritual practice of fasting. Meditate on these ideas and write your thoughts here.