**Bethlehem Missionary Baptist Church -- BIBLE STUDY 3/19**

**KNOW, BELIEVE AND ACHIEVE STUDIES**

Elder Jesse Hinson

**IT’S ONLY A TEST  Matthew 4:1-11; 17:21**

1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. 2 And when he had **fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred**. **3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.** 4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. **5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, 6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.** 7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. **8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.** 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. **11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.**

 17:**21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.**

WE ARE IN THE MIDST OF THE LENTEN SEASON.  THE SEASON OF WHICH OUR MESSIAH IS ACCEPTING THE MINDSET OF WHAT HE CAME HERE TO DO…SHED HIS BLOOD AND GIVE HIS LIFE FOR OUR SINS.

GIVING UP (OR PICKING UP)  SOMETHING DURING LENT CAN ENRICH OUR FAITH PRACTICE, CULTIVATE OUR SENSE OF NEEDING A SAVIOR AND SHOW OUR FAMILIES WHAT GOD HAS ACCOMPLISHED FOR US IN HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION.  BY INTENTIONALLY CUTTING OURSELVES OFF FROM THE THINGS THAT TEMPORARILY SATISFY, WE CONFRONT THE FACT THAT WE MAY HAVE CREATED SUBTLE IDOLS OF THEM; WEAKENING OUR SPIRITUAL CAPABILITY TO FIGHT IN SPIRITUAL AREAS.

ELDER HINSON PREACHED AN INSPIRING MESSAGE THIS PAST SUNDAY.  HIS ULTIMATE MESSAGE WAS TO MAKE SURE WE’RE READY TO TRUST GOD THROUGH THE TESTS AND TESTING SEASONS THAT WILL SURELY COME.  SO MANY CONVERSATIONS POTENTIALLY ARE HELD IN HIGH PLACES AND HEAVEN, THAT WE ARE NOT PRIVY TO; AND ULTIMATELY, WE ARE EXPECTED TO TRUST IN THE LORD AND LEAN NOT TO OUR OWN UNDERSTANDINGS.

**Ephesians 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.**

THOUGHTS: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**IT’S ONLY A TEST**

**Matt. 3:16** And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: 17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

**Jesus' three temptations in the wilderness are basically focused on one thing: the temptation to use his newly-pronounced spiritual identity and how Jesus deals with temptation in the light of His humanity.**

**SERMONIC POINTS:**

**1 CHRIST SUCCESSFULLY CONFRONTED THE DEVIL**

1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. 2 And when he had **fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred**. **3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.** 4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by **every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God**.

-Discovering your spiritual maturity oftentimes requires alone time.

**QUESTION: HOW DOES “ALONE TIME” SUPPORT YOUR SPIRITUAL MATURITY?**

-“tempt” means to **entice** a to do wrong, to **seek** to seduce to sin, to try

          to **persuade**him to

  take the wrong way

-It means to “test” far more than it means to tempt in our sense of the word.

-Tests are given when you’ve been provided the answers to respond correctly.

-EVERY WORD …is guidance.

-**Every time we fast, we are saying with Jesus, "Not bread alone. But you,** **Lord.**

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**2  THE DEVIL WAS TOO SURE OF HIMSELF**

**5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, 6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.** 7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord **thy God**.

-“IF” was used in the 1st and 2nd test; but cases were **to test what God said**

**or prove what**

**God said** in chapter Matt. 3:16.

-(Psalm 91:12) means that God will protect you from harm, ensuring you don't

        stumble or fall,

even in the smallest way, and is a promise of complete safety and security

-Deuteronomy 6:16 "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test

-“THY” … Jesus is still the devils’ God.

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**3 THE DEVIL TRIED TO TEMPT  CHRIST WITH SHORTCUTS**

**8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.** 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt **worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve**.

-You can’t bypass life’s hardships and realities.  Some things you must accept.

-The rise to becoming great or becoming anything …takes God’s time and God’s

        plan.

-John 1:

1 In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 He existed in the beginning with God.

3 God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him.

4 The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone.

-First time Jesus identifies Satan by name.

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**Matt 17:21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.**

-This passage highlights the reality of spiritual warfare and the need for Christians

         to be vigilant

  and prepared through prayer and fasting

-undivided and intensive devotion to the Lord

-Jesus said faith was the heart of the issue for the disciples' failure to cast the

        demon out (Matthew 17:17)

-They (the disciples) did not sufficiently trust the power of God to work through

        them.

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If you desire a deeper, more intimate and fruitful relationship with God, or if you need His help in a time of real need, prayer and fasting produces deeper faith; and is an important means of humbling oneself for God’s strength in weakness. **HOWEVER, YOU NEED TO EXPERIENCE IT BEFORE THE TEST!**

**FASTING:**

In the Old Testament, the main Hebrew word used is **tsom**, which means “to abstain from food.”

In the New Testament, the Greek word is **nesteuo**, which means “to abstain from eating.”

In both testaments, fasting is going without food in order to seek God for some special reason.

Today there is a tendency to expand the word fasting to include things other than food, such as television, movies, internet, social media, or cell phones. Although it is certainly right to abstain from any number of things that are hindering our relationship with God, **that is not what the Bible means by fasting**. Such abstaining is better described as “**saying no**” to some form of worldliness or harmful fleshly indulgence. **To reiterate, in the Bible, the word fasting means going without food, the purpose of which is to earnestly seek God in prayer.**