

Please welcome...

Preaching for us once again is **Chuck Harris** from the Calimesa church. Be sure to welcome him and thank him for his help!

Pleasing God...

“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” Romans 12:1-2

Address

Pray for **Mike and Kim Bruni**: home address: 69638 Antonia Way, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270. Mike’s phone number is (760) 636-6894.

March Birthdays

2 Gonzalo Medina 9 Jessica Aguiar
8 Drina Zamarripa 18 Buddy Cashion 30 Barrett Hoffman

March Anniversaries

6 Harold and Dortha Gentry 24 Chuck and Pat Limburg

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Preacher:
(Vacant)

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“Pleasing God...”

The Devil’s Approach

By John Baker

When Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, he revealed many of his best tactics. Since Christians are not to be *“ignorant of his devices,”* every sincere child of God ought to be interested in the following principles (2 Corinthians 2:11).

The devil attacks those who are determined to do right. Nobody can be at peace with God without picking a fight with the devil. Jesus is described as a person who *“went about doing good”* (Acts 10:38). Immediately before the account of His temptation in Matthew 4:1–11, Jesus had made it clear that He was interested in fulfilling *“all righteousness”* (Matthew 3:15). Anytime a person chooses to be interested in pleasing, serving, and honoring God, that person can also reasonably expect to begin receiving *“fiery darts”* from the devil (Ephesians 6:16).

The devil often attacks when people are weakest. Jesus had fasted for forty days and forty nights, and the Bible plainly tells us *“he was afterward an hungered”* (Matthew 4:2). From the context of Matthew 4 and the parallel account in Luke 4, it appears that the devil waited until Jesus was weak for this attack. Certainly it can be said that people today are weak when, like Jesus, they are physically and emotionally exhausted. However, it is also worth considering that people today are often especially weak and susceptible to sin when they are celebrating a great success or achievement (cf. Proverbs 16:18).

The devil knows and uses Scripture. In tempting Jesus to test God’s love for Him, the devil quoted Psalm 91:11–12, which

records God's promise to preserve and protect those who are faithful to Him. However, Jesus pointed out that while the promise itself was valid, Jesus' motive in jumping off the temple would have been sinful (Matthew 4:7). Multitudes of false teachers (witting or unwitting agents of Satan, cf. 2 Corinthians 11:13–15) today are likewise guilty of wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction (2 Peter 3:16). Based on the temptation of Jesus, it should surprise no one that the devil knows the Word of God, and that he twists God's Word in ways that will cause people to lose their souls (cf. John 8:44).

The devil appeals to a person's sense of "rights" and "privileges." The devil wants people to believe that they are missing out on something great by being faithful (cf. Genesis 3:4-6). Look at how he tempted Jesus: "You have the power to change rocks into bread; why don't You use it?" "God has said He will preserve You; why not have Him prove it?" "The nations of the earth don't appreciate how great and special You are . . . let me help You get the recognition You deserve!" In every temptation the devil attempts to sow the seeds of doubt. He often does so by implying life would be better if one would take advantage of a sinful opportunity.

The devil is an opportunist. Luke 4:13 states, "*And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.*" The devil is constantly looking for opportunities to tempt the faithful. Scripture describes him as pacing about "*as a roaring lion . . . seeking whom he may devour*" (1 Peter 5:8). Christians are promised that if we "*resist the devil,*" he will "*flee from you*" (James 4:7). However, the devil will continue to look for an opportune time.

May all Christians be aware of the tactics our enemy uses.

Reminder

"Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."

1 Peter 5:8

Choosing a Church

By John Tracy

Why do people place membership with a particular congregation? The responses we are given are varied: "It's a friendly church. The preacher is dynamic. The building is beautiful. They have great programs. They have a good youth group. There is so much activity and excitement there. They understand and accept me."

With a few exceptions, the same reasons could be given for joining a fraternity, a health club, or any professional organization. Is there a more valid criterion for selecting a congregation? Yes! Pleasing God must be our first priority in life (cf. Ecclesiastes 12:13; Micah 6:8; Acts 10:35). Our greatest concern should be to select a local church where all members (especially leaders) are trying to be true to God's Word. If a congregation is not serious about staying true to the Book, then all the programs, hype, and enthusiasm amount to little more than momentary distraction.

How did Jesus evaluate the churches of Asia near the end of the first-century? His assessment of the church at Ephesus centered on its tolerance of wicked people and false teachers, hard work, perseverance in hardship, and action which had characterized their initial love (Revelation 2:1-7). Smyrna needed to stand up under the persecution of opponents and false religious figures (Revelation 2:8-11). Pergamos was tolerating some members who were holding to false teachings (Revelation 2:12-13). Thyatira was tolerating doctrinal impurity (Revelation 2:18-29). In virtually every case, what was important to Jesus was whether these churches knew and defended the truth and whether they put the truth into practice in their own lives.

In our selection of a congregation, we need to find a church where the words of eternal life are revered and where Christ is in their midst (Revelation 2:10). Little else really matters.

Reminder

"He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?" Micah 6:8