

Jesus is Scary Good

The Story: part 23

March 19, 2017

DAY ONE: The baptism of Jesus

1. Jesus Christ is about thirty years old. His ministry begins at his baptism.

Matthew 3:13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John.

¹⁴ But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" ¹⁵ Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented.

¹⁶ As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.

¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

2. Jesus, obviously, didn't need to get baptized in the same way we do, as a result of repentance over sin and faith in Him. Why do you think He chose to be baptized?

3. At Jesus' baptism we get a picture both of the divinity of Christ and his humanity, identifying with people.

4. In vv. 16-17, all three members of the Trinity make themselves known. What did each do?

5. What reasons can you think of as to why God the Father spoke audibly at the baptism of Jesus?

a. What would this say to the people, and to us?

b. What would it say to Jesus?

c. What does this say about God as Father? What is another motivation for Him to speak?

6. His public ministry begins right here! What strikes you most about His baptism?

DAY TWO: The temptations of Jesus

1. Jesus confronts the devil in the wilderness.

Matthew 4:1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

Temptation #1:

³ The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

⁴ Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Temptation #2:

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶ "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."

⁷ Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Temptation #3:

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

2. If you are familiar with how Satan tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden, do you see any similarities in the two temptation stories? (Genesis 3:1-13)

3. What turned out to be a colossal disaster in Genesis 3 is the complete the reverse in Matthew 4. What initial thoughts strike you about Satan's temptation of Jesus in Matt. 4?

4. What similarities do you see in how Jesus responded to each temptation?

5. "Devil" is from the word *diabolos* which comes from a verb which means "to divide." How is this seen in what Satan is trying to do in tempting Jesus?

6. Is there something that struck you about Satan's approach or attack?

7. Is there something that struck you about Jesus' responses to temptation?

DAY THREE: Dissecting the three temptations of Jesus

1. Let's take a closer look at the temptations Jesus faced.

Temptation #1:

³ *The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."*

⁴ *Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"*

Temptation #2:

⁵ *Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶ "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."*

⁷ *Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"*

Temptation #3:

⁸ *Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."*

¹⁰ *Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"*

2. Fill in the chart based on the three temptations of Jesus:

Temptation	What was the essence of the temptation?	What was the essence of Jesus' response to each temptation?
#1		
#2		
#3		

3. What temptations are the most difficult for you to resist and fight?

4. After reading this story, what would help you fight temptation better?

DAY FOUR: The religious leaders rise up

1. Jesus was confronted by the devil through the religious leaders of the day.

Luke 6:6 On another Sabbath he went into the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was shriveled.

⁷ The Pharisees and the teachers of the law were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath.

⁸ But Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Get up and stand in front of everyone." So he got up and stood there.

⁹ Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?"

¹⁰ He looked around at them all, and then said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He did so, and his hand was completely restored.

¹¹ But they were furious and began to discuss with one another what they might do to Jesus.

2. The Jewish religious leaders were mostly in one of two groups:

a. Pharisees: those who took the simple commands of God and turned them into thousands of “rules” that then became the focus of life, instead of God’s simpler commands. This morphed into “legalism,” the belief that if you obeyed the “rules” you were “good,” and would make it into heaven.

b. Sadducees: Were similar to the Pharisees, but didn’t believe in heaven or miracles. They were less zealous than the Pharisees, but still hung onto “legalism.”

3. What begins to happen is that both groups, about six thousand Pharisees and Sadducees became jealous of Jesus’ impact on people, and eventually conspired to have Jesus killed!

4. In our verses for today, Jesus healed a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath. The Pharisees saw this as a clear violation of the fourth command, “You shall keep holy the Sabbath day.” In their mind virtually any kind of activity constituted “work,” even though the man was healed!

5. The religious leaders objected and Jesus stared them down with the anger of God because their hearts were hardened.

6. What strikes you about Jesus in this episode?

DAY FIVE: New birth; "You must be born again."

1. Nicodemus was a notable exception to the hostile religious leaders.

John 3:1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. ² He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him."

³ *In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."*

⁴ *"How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!"*

⁵ *Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.*

⁷ *You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' ⁸ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."*

⁹ *"How can this be?" Nicodemus asked.*

¹⁰ *"You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things? ¹¹ I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. ¹² I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven--the Son of Man. ¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

2. Even though Nicodemus has been schooled in the Old Testament, he is virtually clueless about being born again.

3. How does Jesus illustrate being born again?

4. Is being born again something visible or invisible?

5. When someone becomes born again, it is a spiritual rebirth, something invisible. However, you should be able to see the effects of someone being born again! It is like the wind. You cannot see the wind, but you can see the effects of the wind!

6. John 3:16, the last verse in our passage is the most famous verse for man Christians. What strikes you most about this verse?

7. As we finish this week, what most strikes you about Jesus Christ?