



Pastor's Reflections- Looking Forward Through Looking Back

I am looking forward to our quickly approaching mission trip to Thailand. As each day passes I become more eager to see what the Lord has on His agenda for us. As on all previous trips the team has prepared as though everything depends on us, yet knowing that God has plans of His own for our time in Thailand. He has always used some of our preparation and yet He often redirects some of our plans and uses us in ways that we never imagined. With that in mind I also look back to reflect on God's redirections in the past.

I remember how on my first trip to Cambodia how God redirected Paul Edmiston and I which resulted in an entire family of seven adults to believe in Christ. It even made getting H-Pylori worthwhile.

Then there was the time when Dr. John Boozer and I were in Mombasa, Kenya prepared to do village-to-village evangelism, but God opened the door to teach the local church leaders Ethno-Doxology which resulted in the churches producing a biblically-based, theologically sound culturally relevant hymnal of 12 songs in their heart language to be played with their instruments. It was absolutely amazing to hear the church express their worship of God in such a way.

I could reflect on just how so many times God has intervened in our trips. Some times He performs works of salvation; other times He does works in our lives much like He did in Jaipur back in September. Again that too was a trip in which God redirected our plans and replaced them with His.

Pray for our Thailand team as we seek to serve our Lord February 4-17, 2023.

Blessings, Pastor Ed

Article- The Temptations of Christ

When I open the temptation door, even a crack, Satan usually kicks the door down and I end up falling into sin. If I flirt with temptation or harbor it in any way I usually end up falling.

Jesus purposely "flirted" with temptation. Matthew 4 says he purposely went into the wilderness "to be tempted by the devil." Then he fasted for forty days and forty nights. After not eating for over one month Jesus would have been very hungry and probably physically weak.

We read that Satan "came to him and said to Him, 'if you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.'" The devil did the same thing here he did in The Garden; he tried to get Jesus to sin because of pride and challenged Jesus' Godhood. Clearly changing stones to bread was not a sinful act. But Satan was trying to get Jesus' human emotions and ego to override His Godhood.

Jesus underwent this fast to weaken himself in His humanity due to lack of food. Hebrews 2 tells us, "For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted." Again, in Hebrews 4 we see that "we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin."

But for those forty days He had been in constant worship and fellowship with God the Father. Thus He actually was strong in his human spirit. If we would stay in prayer and fellowship daily with God, we too would be stronger and much less likely to fall into sin.

When we are tempted, we need to do the same thing Jesus did and use God's Word to deflect the devil's darts. Jesus immediately to Satan by quoting precisely from Scriptures and telling the

devil that it was God's Word He was speaking. He flat told the devil that the food we eat is not the only thing we need to survive, rather man needs God's Word too.

The sin of pride worked in The Garden and Satan determined it would work with Jesus. He then put Jesus on the highest tower in the temple of Jerusalem. Then the devil repeated the same opening line to his temptation, "If you are the Son of God." Then the devil takes a different tact, he quotes scripture from Psalm 91 ("For He will give His angels charge concerning you, To guard you in all your ways. They will bear you up in their hands, That you do not strike your foot against a stone."). As with Eve in the Garden Satan twisted the verse.

Jesus again rebuffs the devil with the correct scripture; reminding him at the same time what the correct relationship is between Jesus and Satan. "YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST (Mt. 4:7)."

The devil is getting frustrated now. So goes for an all or nothing ploy. He takes Jesus to a "very high mountain" and shows "Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory (vv 8,9)." Of course Jesus already owned all of creation.

Nevertheless if Jesus had bowed down to Satan, all would have been lost! Jesus would have failed in His ultimate mission of dying for my sins, and your sins, and all of mankind's sins. That is why it was a "nothing or nothing" proposition.

Jesus answers the deceiver's confrontation with a final command from Scripture. "YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD AND SERVE HIM ONLY." Satan then tucked his pointy tail between his legs and departs. Matthew tells us then the angels did come and began to minister to Him. Praise to our God.

D. D. Edwards

Bible- *After He was baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and [m]settling on Him, 17 and behold, a voice from the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." (Mt. 3:16-17)*

February Prayer Requests

Thailand Missions Team

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|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Pastor Ed & Debi | 7. Kathy Snead |
| 2. Karen Bullock | 8. Jimmie & Faye Tucker |
| 3. Carey Crawford | 9. Kenny & Fonda Williams |
| 4. Teena Dixon | 10. Garren Williams |
| 5. Janice Florio | 11. Braylyn Williams |
| 6. Nancy Peaslee | 12. Ansen Williams |
| 7. Sharon Smith | 13. Harland Peaslee recovery |

Welcome Aboard-

**Warren &
Marilyn Lewis**



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