

## The devil – people Jesus met

See service sheet online at [www.knbc.org](http://www.knbc.org)

Dave to lead

Welcome

Opening Scripture: Isaiah 61:1-3, 10-11

Opening Hymn: MP 975 'Before the Throne of God above'

Prayer: Adoration and Praise

Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

Notices / Prayer leading into ... The Lord's Supper

Main reading: Matthew 4:1-11

Hymn: MP 465 'Meekness and Majesty'

Sermon: Watch out – The devil is after you!

Hymn: MP 637 'Thanks be to God who gives us the victory'

Closing Prayer and Benediction:

Rom. 15:5-6 *May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Close -----

Listen to today's sermon by clicking on the link at [www.knbc.org](http://www.knbc.org).

The audio file is [21\\_06\\_06.mp3](#).

*Welcome and pray*

- Boris Johnson having just recovered from coronavirus saw it as an assailant whom he described in typically colourful language as "an unexpected and invisible mugger", it was that unseen enemy.

There were secret threats during the cold war, now there is cybercrime.

- A teacher friend in front of the screen at his school looked on as one after another files being deleted. This was the work of an unseen foe probably somewhere across the world. An unseen force was at work causing havoc and destruction.

Unseen enemies are no less real – and you have an unseen enemy. There is an unseen force at work seeking your ruin and destruction. Do you realise that?

To believe in God is to believe in the devil. **Both are unseen - both are real.**

The Bible has plenty to say to us about him – and we ought to take him much more seriously than we do.

At this time of Jesus' temptation, the devil appeared and attacked Jesus. So as we continue to look at people Jesus met it is right to include the Devil.

*So who is Satan?*

In the NT the word devil is 'diabolos' meaning 'false accuser', in Hebrew Satan means the 'adversary'. He is called "The prince and god of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the dragon, that old serpent, the devil, that wicked one, a roaring lion, a murderer, a liar, the accuser of the brethren. He is everywhere shown to be full of malice, cruelty and deceit, hating both God and man. (see Amtract below). **He slanders God to man, and man to God.**

There are a number of places where we read more of who he is. Hear Ezekiel: the Sovereign LORD says: "‘You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ..... You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. you sinned, so I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendour. So I threw you to the earth; Eze 28:12-17

Isaiah 14 fills in some more detail: **How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star** (The AV has 'Lucifer' Latin for light bearer). **You have been cast down to the earth, .... you said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."**

**But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit."** Is 14:12-15

So the Devil is a being created resplendent and glorious – but he became proud. That is his hallmark Pride. Pride seeks to be first, Pride means to take God's place – so he was banished from heaven to this earth. When he fell to earth he took a large number of other angels with him. These fallen angels are known as Demons. Jesus also met demons who were living in people, who had possessed people and he cast them out. They knew who Jesus was. Demons still possess people today. They are unclean spirits, they are Satan's spirit followers and they do his destructive work in this world.

Satan is the great force of evil in the world; his grand object is to counteract the good that God desires to do. He exerts himself, with his angels, to draw away the souls of men from seeking salvation through Jesus Christ.

Those who do not follow Christ he has already, he has convinced them not to take seriously the urgent need to turn to the Saviour – and they have swallowed the lie. Now he pursues Christians for we are alive to God.

- Pheasant shooting both barrels one killed outright one winged which one would the gun dog go after? The live bird.

The devil is **enraged** and wars against those who obey God's commands and hold fast to Jesus – if you do that? Then you are in his sights.

### *The royal chain attacked*

The Devil has hated the day when there would be followers of Christ from all around the world and sought to stop it from the beginning.

So from tempting Adam and Eve onwards, he has tried to thwart God's plan through Joseph, Moses and the killing of the babies, Slaves in Egypt, Naomi and Saul trying to kill David. He did it through the compromising of the ten tribes out of the twelve so that most of it was mixed in with pagan nations and dissolved away, however the tribe from which Jesus came, Judah was kept intact. Remember when Jesus was born Herod tried to kill him off through the slaughter of the babies.

In vivid picture language John says **when the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman** that is the church **who had given birth to the male child."** i.e Jesus to try to stop him entering into this world Re 12:13

The devil's attention has always on Jesus the Glorious Son of God and so when he entered this world there is an explosion of satanic/demonic activity.

As the Lord's Jesus entered as Prince of Light, so Satan did as prince of darkness. His ordinary operation is on men's minds by invisible temptation, but at that moment he rushes into open conflict with Jesus Christ and took possession of men's bodies also. So we see a burst of demonic possession.

### *Temptation*

In our passage of Jesus's temptation note it is not the devil who sets up the contest, it is Jesus. Jesus if he is to be our champion against sin needs to be tested to the uttermost – and still maintain his purity, so here straight after his baptism and at the commencement of his ministry here we see the demonstration of his ability and credentials to be the Saviour.

✚ Here is the famous duel, fought hand to hand, between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.

Jesus has put himself at man's extremity, 40 days without food is at the body's limit. He is near death. <sup>2</sup> After fasting for forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. He is in the outer reaches of the Judean desert. Christ as our representative is alone, there is none with him or can be with him.

This is forty days of communion with God His father. Beware! It is straight after times of closeness to God that temptation can come. It is at this point that Satan himself appears and tempts Jesus to turn the stones into bread.

How his body must have yearned for food. Should he give in? Hadn't he done enough and proved the point? Yet to yield would be to take matters into his own hands and not rely on God to provide. The devil taunted he saying that to do this would prove you are to Son of God. **If, if** you are the son of God... then.... But to do so would make him a disobedient son.

The response is to stand on God's word <sup>4</sup> **Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"** The same in Luke 4:4 btw

Jesus shows that the way to resist temptation is to use God's word.

It's our weapon, the word of God is like a sword, that short Roman sword used for close combat. This is what you need when the enemy closes in.

**Know it?** Christ need not turn stones into bread, but trust God to keep him alive. He had done so for the last forty days of hunger, he could do so now.

✚ **The point: Do not give in or give up on the Father's goodness over you.**

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So next <sup>5</sup> **Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.** <sup>6</sup> **"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."**

Here is a view of God that many have fallen into to. "God will be there for me". I don't have to do anything but I still expect him to look after me. God is not at your beck and call. Do you treat God like that? As if he is one of the emergency services who will come and help me in my moment of need, fix my problem and then thank you - you can go now. Never view God like.

✚ **The point: Resist the subtle temptation of the Devil to take God's place.**

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The historian Josephus describes **the highest point of the temple** as so high that it would make a man's head giddy to look down.

Note: High places are places of temptation. I don't mean high buildings, but high places; they are slippery places; doing well in the world makes a man a fair mark for Satan to shoot his fiery darts at. Satan will like to puff you up, raise you up, only to then knock you down. That is also true for those in high places in the church which can be especially dangerous. Those who excel in gifts, seek to be first, or are looked up to, have need to keep humble; for Satan will be sure to aim at you, beware of pride – or you will fall into the condemnation of the Devil.

✚ **The point: If you stand high then make sure you stand fast.**

Like to quote scripture?? so does the devil! He's into 'fake news' so he misuses scripture, he distorts the word of God. Can you see how? As a master of lies he had been very successful in persuading others to do just this ever since. Fake news usually has some truth mixed in with it. Distorting the word of God - is to distort God - so you end up with a god who is not the true God, one who is imaginary.

I had spent quite a bit of time thinking about what God was like years ago but I was blind - when I heard the truth I realized how wrong I had been.

There's the tyrant god, the god who doesn't care, there's the god who gives you all you want - no strings attached! None of these gods are real so none have made a way to save you from the judgment to come. The true God is a God of justice – but in his love He has provided the solution in Christ. The truth of God is seen in the cross. **CROSS**

Don't believe the devil's lie 'Don't worry it will all work out fine in the end'. Don't continue as you are thinking there is nothing for you to do. If you don't repent of that sinful self-centered way you will never receive the gift of eternal life. Christ's grace is never cheap grace, God forbid. <sup>7</sup> **Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"**

✚ **The point: Do not presume upon God. x2**

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Lastly - <sup>8</sup> **the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour.** <sup>9</sup> **"All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."**

"All this I will give you," Luke records **"I will give you all their authority and splendour, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to.**

They didn't The *nations of the earth* had been, long before, promised to the Messiah; if he be *the Son of God*, they belong to him; Satan pretends now to be a good angel, **"All this I will give you,"** see how generous I am. It's [click bait](#). I will send you off believing you have won the lottery you can have everything, but you won't win - you will end up with nothing. - For there's nothing there, just a phantom there is nothing real or solid. The devil's baits are all a sham; they are shows and shadows, you end up in a hall of mirrors.

■ When I was young I was very wide eyed, I wanted so much, in everything there was a promise, there was something I would gain from having this .. or that – it's always the next thing. The devil has them lined up for you.

What is it? That new phone, or Macbook, The new car? The children, the home improvement, the degree? The job? That boy or girlfriend? What is it that promises that something extra for me? That is how Satan's evil power works, it adds 'power' to things. **That is how idols are made.** The result is without realizing the object of worship is Satan. **"All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."**

Jesus does not wobble as you and I might but straight away with sharp clarity said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

**The point: Do not seek false riches there's always a snag – but true riches.**

**11 Then the devil left him,** Mt 4:1-11

Resist the devil and he will yield, he will flee from you, draw close to God and he will draw close to you. And so here **angels came and attended him.**" Stand fast in temptation and you will see both the Lord's deliverance AND also his provision. He will send his angels will attend to you.

**Make the lord your trust - and anywhere you go, - whatever you do - you need not worry. Stand firm trust Him and God's protection will be yours.**

Adam and Eve's failed in the garden. Here Jesus the last Adam tempted in the same way did not fail. The way the devil tempted Adam and eve, is the way he tempted Jesus - and the way he now tempts you and I.

It is the flesh, the eyes and the pride of heart - **For everything in the world — the cravings of sinful man (the flesh), the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does— comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives for ever.**" 1Jo 2:15-17 So **Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. You must chose.**

1. That is how you are tempted today watch out where you look, your eyes will soak up advertising, catalogues, those headlines designed to catch the eye.
2. Do you have a good appetite? Watch out when the body says to you "more". Food, comfort, pampering. beware of sexual temptation don't allow yourself to be drawn.
3. So too with the heart, that desire to be important, to be valued and liked and loved. It is in Christ alone - who is your maker - will you find true satisfaction.

■ **Mick Jagger was right when he sang saying he could find 'no satisfaction'**

Jesus's victory in this desert puts right the failure of the Israelites in the desert 1400 years before. There many died in the desert because they would not trust God's good promises. Here Jesus as the true Israelite, passes.

✚ **They fail, you and I fail, He does not fail. It is the devil who fails.**

***This attack on Jesus fails, just like every other.*** - The day came when the devil thought he has won - Jesus is lead away to be crucified, It is Satan behind the crowds shouting, It is he who hardened the Jewish leaders, it is

Satan who has manipulated weak Pontius Pilate to give in to their demands and now the he has won. Jesus the Son of God is dead.

.....But wait a moment, there is movement, there is life, and then suddenly Satan's horror upon horror becomes a reality. Jesus is alive again, He has won! **That was the day when tables were turned.**

Jesus' victory over death, is Jesus' victory over sin, it is also his victory over Satan the accuser of your sins. Jesus turns the cross from the greatest defeat into greatest victory. Jesus is the Champion, my champion against that great unseen foe. **"And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross."** Col 2:15

**As Pharaoh's army were all drowned and destroyed - so for someone in Christ the power of the foe has gone, it is only my thoughts that now accuse.**

Satan's days are numbered, He is a defeated foe and will one day be banished into hell forever. **Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short."** Re 12:12

Yes he is filled with fury so watch out, he is on the war path **he is after you -** Don't get caught out - anyone who seeks to be Godly is in his sights. He is out to destroy your marriage, your family relationships, to separate and divide through that careless tongue.

✚ **This enemy -while an unseen enemy - is still and enemy we can know.**

**We have learned much about how Covid spreads, now we are better placed to combat it,** so too with the Devil as Paul said **in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.** 2Co 2:11

His aim is to persuade you not to take the things of God seriously. "It's not that important, don't worry you can leave it". He hates you will try to drive in a wedge so you will not repent and know and enjoy God and have a life of peace and joy with him.

✚ **If you are a follow Christ you do not need to fear - but to stand firm.**

Satan is limited by God in what he can do, he is on a chain, like a chained dog he can go so far - but no further. He cannot hurt God's elect so stand firm. John says how Christians used to stand firm and beat Satan: **They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.** Re 12:11 **End**