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This passage of scripture today is so important because it takes in every one of us.

I know that Steve and Beth will be here and Addie will be here in a little bit. I just believe. Oh, well there they are. They made it. I knew they could do it. Yeah, I believe in you. It's good to see you. Today I want to talk topic, "The Devil is in the Details." And when it comes to making deals, that is a little saying that is used quite often. And we'll get into that in a minute.

But what I want to do is take you, there are two instances in scripture, two parallel passages in Luke chapter 4 and in Matthew chapter 4, that tell us the story of when Jesus began his ministry.

And he began that ministry and he began it fasting and praying. And he was a man like us men here and like us humans. And I want to say up front he didn't turn on his divine power to defeat the devil. He was a man full of the Holy Spirit that we're going to read about here in just a minute. But he faced the devil and the devil tried to make a deal with him there in the desert. You know the devil went down to Georgia. He was looking for a soul to steal. You heard about that. Okay, well he don't just go to Georgia. All right, he comes to Missouri and he goes to India and he goes to riot anywhere. So let me, let me read these passages in the story. We're going to, now he, we read about three temptations that he was given. I'm just one and I've preached on these before. But I want to do something I've never done before. I want to concentrate just on this one particular temptation. All right, so I've carved up Luke in order to emphasize that today. All right, then Jesus being filled with the Holy Spirit returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. Again, notice an important concept that I won't be able to speak on again, but before time. But Jesus faced the devil full of the Holy Spirit and he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness there. Being tempted for 40 days by the devil. All right, we're just going to read a little, you know, a little snapshot here. But this lasted over, you know, over a month that he was subjected to this. And then we skip down to verse 5, because I want to zero in on this one temptation. "Then the devil, taking him up on a high mountain, showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time." I mean, supernatural. Again, we're talking about, you know, a fallen angel here, Lucifer. "And the devil said to him, 'All this authority I'll give you, and their glory, for this has been delivered to me.'" And we'll touch on that. "And I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if you will worship before me, all will be yours.'" And Jesus answered and said to

him, 'Get thee behind me, Satan, for it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only you shall serve.' Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time." Let's pray. God, as we open your Word today, open our eyes, open our ears, open our minds of understanding that we might receive this important issue in our lives that all of us deal with. At any given time, there are temptations out there. At any given time, there are people that are enslaved by the devil. Help us to recognize this. Help us to help others to be relieved from his clutches through prayer, through intercession, through testimony. And help us, Lord, today to realize there is a war going on at any given time, a war behind the scenes. Lord, open our minds to receive your Word today and give you the glory. In Jesus' name I pray, amen. Now, I want to begin this message today, and I don't want to take anything for granted. I don't want to make any assumptions. And what I mean by that is, you would go in the typical liberal church, and I would say, you know, a lot of the politicians and everyone that you see on the scenes and people who run for president and so on and so forth, a lot of the liberal churches, they don't believe in a literal devil, all right? They're too sophisticated for that. They've been to college or higher education institutions, all right? So they say that, you know, you backwoods Baptist preachers or you conservative churches, you know, you just use him to scare people. You're just trying to scare people away from that place called hell. That stuff is primitive. That's ancient. We progress by that. We've evolved Satan. He's just a poster boy for evil and wicked. He doesn't really exist. He doesn't really exist, all right? So we can't see him. Have you ever seen him? You can't see him. Have you ever, you know, you can't see him with the telescope, can't see him with a microscope, and so on and so forth.

So again, my answer to those people is, he's already got you where he wants you. He wants you there, all right? He wants you there, all right? And if you're not smart enough to believe in him, all right, again, you've got a problem, okay? You've got a problem. "Professing themselves to be wise," the Bible says, "they became fools." Now, the devil is in the details, and that's an old adage, and what it simply means is, you better take the time, all right? Like, for instance, with a document, or you better take the time when somebody presents something to you to check the fine print, to check it all out, every detail, because you might miss something that's real important. You know, the old adage, you know, "The big print giveth, the little print taketh away." Somebody may be offering you a bargain, and I think probably all of us have been hoodwinked sometime in the past by some charlatan, and sometimes it may be somebody behind a pulpit, all

right? So I want to share some details with you this morning about the devil being in the details, and the first detail I want to share with you up here on the screen this morning and talk about is detail number one, is the devil exists, and he's a real enemy.

I won't be able to get too much further with you if you don't receive that fact, all right? Now, I want to say up front, Jesus, as we just read, had a conversation, all right? If he had a conversation with a figment of his imagination, then Jesus is in trouble, all right? If the devil doesn't exist, then why do we believe Jesus exists, all right? He's not just talking to himself here. We've got a real enemy, and I want to tell you, he's a super marketing person, and in this day and age of social media where everyone's out there blogging and this, that, oh, he's got them working. All you got to do is look at your phone. All you got to do is turn on the television. He's a great marketer, and one of the things that he's marketed, and he's marketed this for years, is the devil is just this silly looking thing, you know? He wears a red suit, and he's got horns, and a long tail, and he's got a pitchfork, okay? They even put that on cans of food, all right, if you know what I'm saying. So what I'm saying is, he's a real enemy, all right? That's where we got to come from. If you don't believe that, you need to confess that as a sin. Hey, I better change my way of thinking. He's a real enemy, and I want to tell you something about him.

It isn't like he has to make a deal, because Jesus said, all right, and the Bible tells us, all right, that he already owns souls. I am one that he rescued. The Lord rescued me, all right? I was one of the devil's children. I'm lucky I'm still alive. Lucky I'm still alive. In my salad days, I did some things I wouldn't even want to talk about, all right, okay? I didn't become a Christian until I was 22 years old, all right? So I kind of had my wild and woolly days, and the Bible, Jesus said regarding the devil, all right, he said there in John chapter 8, "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do," all right? See, that's one of the big key differences. If you're a Christian, he changes your want-to's. He changes your desires. You don't want to do those things anymore. Now, it doesn't mean you're perfect.

Doesn't mean you can't slide. It doesn't mean, again, that you can't fall away for a while. The Bible says, "All we like sheep have gone astray." We can go astray, and notice the description there in Ephesians. When we were in that, when we were of one of his children, we walked according the course of this world. This world has got a way of doing things, a way of looking at things, all right? We see it, especially we see it here in the political world right now, leading up to elect. We see how people go a

certain way, how they're remoting certain things, okay? Can you imagine they take the typical person running for president. Do you believe in the literal devil? Ha, ha, ha. What? Do you believe he's got the world, that people are working, going a certain way? Oh, what? What do you, you don't believe in that stuff, do you? All right. Notice, he's the prince of the power there. He's the spirit that now works in those who are disobedient sons and daughters.

We want to know why things are the way they are. Why do people go into schools and shoot people? All right. Why do people kidnap people? Why do people hurt and injure? Why do, why the wars, why the bloodshed?

Remember Jesus said about him, all right? He's a thief. He steals, he kills, he destroys. Now, I said all that to say this. He's not going to come to you and say, "Here's the contract." Some demon-possessed individual's not going to come to you and say, "Here's a contract. I want you to sign it. I want you to sign this contract and you'll be mine." See, the issue is, he's already got us in his clutches, okay? And that's why we do what we do when we're lost.

That's why we follow a certain way. That's why we're disobedient to God. That's why we have no desire to worship him, to sing his praises, to pray to him, to seek him out, to call upon his name, because we're going to walk according to the course of this world, and the course of this world is not to be in church on Sunday morning. The course of this world is not to be a prayer warrior. The course of this world is not to be in the Word of God. The course of this world is not to witness to lost people, because you don't even recognize you're a lost person, see?

He's got us that deceived. Now, here's the other issue. When we're lost, he's got us deceived, but when we become a Christian, it's like we draw a bullseye on our shirt. We're his enemy now. We've left his side, and we've went over to the good guy, all right? We've changed hats, all right? Now, we are serving the Lord, and things have changed. We're not walking according to the course of this world, and he doesn't like that. We're not following and going to according to the Prince of the Power of the Air, and we're no longer again following him and disobeying God. We're coming, and we're again following the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, I said all that to say this. You become a Christian, it isn't that temptations get lessened. They get greater.

They get greater. He works harder. Hey, if he can get, for instance, if he can get a minister to fall, what do people talk about? Did you see out there that pastor out there? Did you see what happened to him? What? He was in the newspaper. I thought, well, here comes again the devil's

spokesperson, the advocate. You know, all them people are just hypocrites. That's why I don't go to church. They're just a bunch of hypocrites. They're all that way. They don't really believe that stuff and do that stuff. So again, the temptations are out there, but here's the ticket I want you to remind. Jesus was tempted. Temptation is not the sin. It's succumbing to the temptation. You know, I've shared with you before many times Martin Luther's famous saying, "I can't keep the birds from flying over my head, but I can keep them from building a nest in my hair," all right? So it's not the temptation, and we see here again how Jesus handles this. And so detail number one, Satan is a real enemy, all right? Detail number two, the devil's worldly offer to Jesus.

Notice what he offers the Lord. He takes him up on a high mountain, shows him all the kingdoms in the world in a moment of time. Snapshot, snapshot. Oh, here, here, here it is. Look at everything. Look at it shine. Look at it sparkle. I mean, it's light lit up like Vegas. It's lit up like New York Times Square. I mean, look at all the lights. Look at all that stuff. Oh, it just looks so good. Again, remember the old adage, "All that glitters is not gold." Oh, but it looks gold. It looks gold. And the devil said to him, "All this authority I'll give you and their glory, for this has been delivered me and I'll give it to whoever I wish." Now, the offer to Jesus was basically, "I'll make you king of the world." All right? And notice one key thing here, and that is Jesus did not dispute him. He didn't say, "You can't offer me that. You can't give me that." What's the Bible tell us? Well, the Bible tells us he's the ruler of this world.

The Bible tells us that the whole world lies in his lap. It says, "Lies in the lap of the wicked one." The Bible says, "Calls him the God of this age." All right? So, it is one kingdom over with one king over it.

He is, as we just read, the prince of the power of the air. He's the ruler of darkness. It doesn't mean that he literally possesses them, but he has them for a time because in essence, Jesus is coming and fulfilling what he is called as the second Adam or the last Adam, because the first Adam handed it over to the devil. He gave up the dominion. You remember? Adam had dominion over everything, and then when he believed the lie, he gave the devil the death card, and all of us, and all of Adam's offspring, why do we go to funerals?

Because of what Adam did. We have Adam's genes in us, and I pass them on to my family, and you'll pass them on to yours, and what is the end result? The wages of sin is death.

So, here is the devil, and I want you to see something key that Jesus said about his kingdom and what he's offering here. In Matthew chapter 12, all

right, they accuse Jesus of being demon-possessed.

You remember that? They called him Beelzebub, the Lord of Flies, all right?

Notice Jesus, Matthew 12, 25, "Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, 'Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation.'"

Sounds like America, doesn't it? "And every city or house divided against itself will not stand." That was what Abraham Lincoln quoted from that

passage of Scripture right when the Civil War began, all right? And notice, now notice, here's the analogy that that I want you to see. If Satan cast out Satan, he's divided against himself. How then, notice, his kingdom stands.

He has a kingdom. He offered that kingdom to Jesus, all right? Now, we know, all right, the kingdoms of this world are not yet Christ, because Isaiah chapter 9 and verse 6 says, "For unto us a child is born," speaking of Jesus's birth, "and to us a son is given, and the government will," notice, future tense, "will be upon his shoulders." Think about our country.

Do our leaders get down on their knees before they pass a bill or make a decision and say, "Lord, what would you have us do? What does your word say about this? How, what avenue should we go?" You know, sometimes America has been called that we're a Christian nation. In all totality, there's never been a nation that was a Christian nation, and there will not be one until what? The government rests on his shoulders, all right? That's when it will fully and completely be realized.

So right now, Christ rules over a spiritual kingdom, and I'm glad to say that I'm a part of that spiritual kingdom, and if you're a Christian here today, you're a part of that kingdom, all right? And we're trying to win people, more people, all right, from the devil's kingdom to the Lord's kingdom, from the ruler of darkness, all right, to the ruler of light. Now, Jesus, in His temptation here, knows the future. He's God. He knows the past, and He knows the present, and He knows what the Word says because it's His Word, and the Bible says, and I know the ladies are studying Revelation on their Bible study, all right? The Bible says in Revelation chapter 11, it's a key passage here that tells us about the future, and it says, notice the kingdoms of this world have become, that is they're not now, but have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. He shall reign forever and ever, and of course, that last reminds me of Handel's Messiah, you know, He shall reign forever, and hallelujah, hallelujah, but anyway, notice that when those final judgments come, Armageddon happens, then the day will come that He will rule, and I want to tell you what, He'll rule on the millennium, a thousand year reign of Christ, He will rule again when there's the new heaven and the new earth, and of course, then we're speaking about all eternity. So for a period of time right now, the devil has his

kingdoms to offer to Jesus, and the Father has already promised that those kingdoms will belong to the Son in Psalm 2, chapter 2, I want you to see, and verse 7 says, "I declare the decree the Lord has said to me, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you.

Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance.'" What is, why is the devil offering this then to Him? Here is one of his key problems, and the key ways he deceives people, and one of the details is that what? He wants us to shortcut His, the plan of Almighty God, he wants, he's wanting Jesus to avoid the cross, avoid the pain, you can have it all right now, Jesus, you don't have to die on a cross, of course, He knows if He dies on the cross, He's what?

The devil is doomed, because Adam opened up the door and brought death on everyone, and here's Jesus, and He's going to undo everything that Adam did, so He's saying, "Bypass the cross, I'll give you the crown right now, I'll give you the crown right now, you can do away with the suffering, you don't have to go through all of that suffering," and that brings me to detail number three, as far as the devil in the details, and here is a key thing that I want you to always remember, number one, that He's real, and what is His main thing that He wants? He wants us to fall down and worship Him, and I want to tell you right now, people, "I don't do that," well, let's look here, let's think about this, notice, here is the devil, he says, "Therefore, if you'll worship before me, all will be yours," notice, "and He said to him, all these," here I'm quoting the parallel passage in Matthew chapter 4, "and He said, all these things I will give to you, if you'll fall down and worship me," now, let's think about this, here's the key issue in life, life 101, we have a worship issue, life is really deciding this parameter, who are you going to worship? Now, I want to tell you something, you'll worship yourself, you're not worshipping the Lord, if you worship yourself, in essence, you're worshipping the devil, it's that simple, anything that he can get us to take away from the glory of God, all right, it's us worshipping what he wants, he wanted to be worshipped, he will continue to want to be worshipped, he'll continue to try to steal worship away from the Heavenly Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, can you imagine if he could have got Jesus to say, "Boy, this looks good, I can have it all now, and I don't have to mess with the cross, and I don't have to suffer, and I don't have to bleed, and I don't have to die, and I don't have to subject myself to all those things," see, that would have been our doom, wouldn't it?

Our doom, see, the devil, Satan, Lucifer, he has a lust, and we see here his main motivation is, he wants to be worshipped, and you know what the future holds? Again, that book of Revelation tells us the future holds the

fact that there's going to be a person that's going to come on the scene, the way Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit, this person called the Antichrist is going to be filled with the devil, and what does the Antichrist want? He wants to be worshipped, worshipped, look with me, Revelation chapter 13, again, this is in the future, it was great, he was granted power to cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed, now I guarantee you that if people that know anything about this episode in the Bible, what do they always remember? 666, 666, I've heard, I've had people before they go and they check out and the bill comes to 666, oh well, I'm gonna go buy something else, I don't want that, I remember I worked with a lady, all right, and that happened to her, and this poor lady, I knew she wasn't a believer, and again, I'm thinking, ma'am, you're worrying about nonsense when you ought to be worrying about your soul, you ought to be thinking about your soul, but again that's the way the devil has people tricked, but notice what he's going, if you don't worship, you'll be killed, see that? He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive mark on their hand or their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, the number of the name, and the Bible tells us, and we're not going to take the time to turn there, but the Bible tells us, that those who do receive that, and who do sell their souls, and who do take the mark, and who do basically say, oh I got to worship, I got to worship the devil here, I ain't got no choice, the Bible says the wrath of Almighty God will come against them, all right, so before the government is put on the shoulders of Jesus, there's going to come one on the scene, he's going to unite people, and then eventually he's going to reveal his dark side, and he's going to show what he's really all about, and that is what? Worshipping the devil, because that's what the devil has always wanted, it's a worship issue, a worship issue. Now here's another way he deceives us, he thinks, we categorize worship when we say, well we come to church, we have a worship service, what do we do? We sing, we pray, we give, we hear a message, that's worship, that's not all worship, that's not all what worship is about, in fact I want you to see it up here on the screen, about, and I want to share with you a biblical definition of what worship is, worship is giving glory to God, giving glory to God, notice 1st Corinthians chapter 10 and verse 31, therefore whether you eat, drink, or notice this, whatever you do, that's, that doesn't leave anything outside, that's all-inclusive, notice, do all to the glory of God, so eating, drinking, you know, before we eat and drink, before we sit down and have picnic tonight at your home, I hope, you say grace, you give glory to God for that food, it didn't just appear, alright, God gave it to you, give us this

day our daily bread, okay, so Jesus here is faced with this dilemma, here's God, is what is God wanting to do? I'll make you king of the world, if you steal the glory away from the Father, if you steal the glory away from the Father, now what is he trying to get Jesus to do? The problem that all of us have, me, myself, and I, look at, what's the world say, look out for number one, take care of number one, what do the politicians appeal to you, hey, we're going to give this for you, we're going to give you this, we're going to do that, we're going to do this, we're going to do that, alright, alright, here's the devil, he's saying, you deserve the best, alright, I'll make you king of your own world, okay, I'll make you king of your own world, forget God, forget his plan, alright, it's, you know, God's plan has suffering in it, it's got a cross in it, you don't want to deal with that, you don't want, have you seen, you know, what they do to some of these Christians, have you seen some of the persecution, you've surely heard about that, you don't want to take up that name of Christ, look what could happen to you, alright, make an idol of yourself, what, it's whatever you want, you know, I met the enemy and the enemy is me, okay, so Paul realized that, Paul said, I die daily, in other words, I have to die daily from what I want and give it over to the Lord in order to worship the Lord, when we worship self, we're not worshiping obviously the Lord, we're worshiping self and in the process we're substituting worship for our Lord, and there's a key passage of Scripture I want you to see up here on the screen in Romans chapter 1 and verse 25 it said, "And they worshiped and served the creature," now this isn't the creature from the Black Lagoon, alright, that's us, that's humanity out there, rather than the Creator, now what is the religion in America, what is the number one idol in America, you don't have to read very long or watch TV very long to find what it is, it's S-E-X, sex, sex, sex and idolatry go together because they're hand-in-hand, our culture, in our culture, sex is a religion, groups like the L-G-B-T-Q-R-S-T-U-V-W alright, they're its denominations, they're the devilist evangelists that are out there, they're trying to convert you to their way of thinking, and when sex is God, then the children, hear me, are the demonic sacrifices we make, why do we want to keep reproductive freedom, so we can go out and have sex and if by chance we get pregnant, we'll just kill the problem, and we'll ease our mind saying it's just a glob of tissue, it's not a child, it's like it's, oh it would just develop into a tree, or a plant, you know, it's not really a baby, it's not a baby until the soul enters it, and we don't know when that even happens, alright, well the Bible tells us in Ruth when it happens, alright, when they came together, alright, now just this past week, there's a rapper, Sean Combs, good old P. Diddy, yeah, I love some of these names they come up with, what's this,

this guy's having it, oh he's in Suicide Watch, last I heard, he's locked up, he can't handle being locked up, well he's locked up people, he's locked up women, he's used them as slaves, alright, he's under scrutiny, he could spend the rest of his life in jail, and just this last week, I don't know if you noticed what was on the news, alright, Catholic churches in Missouri were named in a federal civil lawsuit, eight area Catholic Church are named in this suit, lay 11 plaintiffs who say they were sexually abused by clergy members more than 20 years ago, the plaintiffs who are now adults say that when they were children in the 70s, 80s, they were subjected to several sexual abuse by priests, and that the Springfield and Cape Girardeau diocese turned a blind eye to the abuse, and the Catholic churches listed in this were in Joplin, in Carthage, in Webb City, in Neosho, in Mount Vernon, in Pierce City, in Wentworth, and the plaintiffs were again involved, one girl, two boys from Neosho, one boy from Joplin, and one person from Carthage, and six men, six men who formerly served as parish priests are named in this, and one of those priests whose name was listed as Lee Leonard Chambers was moved around from parish to parish, he'd get caught with his hand in the cookie jar one place, so they'd move him somewhere else, all right?

Now, we say, well, that didn't surprise me about the Catholic Church, well, what would happen just this past week too in the Baptist Church? Well, an associate pastor at Peculiar First Baptist Church in Peculiar, Missouri, was arrested for what?

He was loading child pornography on his computer at the church, and at his home. It's amazing, every week you find someone, some minister, again, what's the devil want to do?

Bad advertisement, stay away from those places, they're phonies, they're hypocrites, they're just, you know, they don't really believe that stuff they teach, and that stuff they preach. Well, I want to tell you something up here on the screen, all right?

Whatever you offer your body to is an object of worship. Notice what the Bible says, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice." That's to the Christian, all right? Imagine if you would 220-somethings out here, all right? They get an apartment together, and

God sees that as a temple, okay? He sees that bed as an altar, and he sees what they do as a religious act, all right? With their bodies, of sacrificing their bodies to who? The devil! It ain't to God, is it? Again, what did I tell you is a religion? Now, what does the world call that? Friends with benefits. That's what the world calls it. See how he changed the

vocabulary? He changes the dictionary. Let me give you a definition of sin. Every time we sin, we're choosing to worship either ourselves or the devil, and that's why, oh, you know, it's just wonderful to come and repent. It's wonderful to get clean, isn't it? It's wonderful to have the blood of Christ. It cleanses from all sin. See, the devil's bargain is you get the whole world. You get the whole world, and that brings me to detail number four, and that is the devil's bargain for souls.

Notice, what does Jesus say? What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul? Now, think about that question he's asking. He's asking us to think about it. Man, I can get all of this, but in the end, I'm gonna lose me. I mean, I can get everything. I can get everything, or what? Notice the question he throws back. What will a man give in exchange for his soul? Well, I tell you this. It won't be the whole world. It will be next to nothing. I want you to show up here. I want to let Aaron put up here on the screen some things about, you know, the devil is always full of half-truths, all right?

A lie is what's closest to the truth. Nobody ever gained the whole world. The most wealthiest person that's ever lived has never gained the whole world. Alexander the Great tried to conquer the whole world and died in the process.

Number two, what part of the world they do gain will not satisfy them. Notice Ecclesiastes chapter 1 and verse 8, "The eyes not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing." We're never going to fill it up, all right? We're never going to see enough. We're never going to hear enough. We're never going to have enough. It doesn't matter how much we have. It won't satisfy us, and notice what part of the world we do gain we can't keep anyway.

We can't keep anyway. I quote Jim Elliot, the great missionary, the famous quote, "He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." You know, we've all played board games like Monopoly. I remember they came out with a game when I was a kid called the Game of Life, all right? And it was this game you'd spin this thing, and you'd get married, and you'd put little cars, you had little cars you moved around. Instead of like Monopoly moving around a thimble or a dog or something, you got to spin this wheel and move so far, and you'd have children. But here's the commonality of all the games. When the game's over, all the stuff goes back in the box. It's gone, all right? I don't care if you got the bragging rights, "Hey, I won everything in Monopoly. I wiped everybody out. Look at, I got all the money. The bank has turned it off. I got all the deeds." But the game's over, and I got to what? I got to turn it all back in. Now,

imagine, all right?

Imagine a newlywed comes home. Husband, his wife's crying.

She says, "Why are you crying?" She said, "Well, I made an apple pie from scratch, and a dog came and knocked it off the table and ate it all." And he said, "Don't worry, honey. We can get a new dog." Now, I want to tell you something. We can get another house. We can get another car. We can't get another soul. We can't get another soul. What is Jesus saying? The soul is worth more than anything you'll ever see, anything you'll ever have, anything you'll ever do. You've got something, and I want to tell you who your soul is.

It's you. It's the real you. It's the you that's going to leave when you go to a funeral, and there is what? An empty shell. The life-giving force of that person. That's why when we say, "When you go visit a grave, you're not visiting that person." Literally, you're visiting the shell that occupied it. It's good to go do that. There's nothing wrong with that, all right? But the real person is gone, and they've went one of two places. Now, again, the devil bargains for souls, so he wants to give us the whole world. He wants to turn our attention on the whole world. And think about it. One of the key things that he does is he divides the world up, and he says, "Well, you know, here's the lower class. Here's the middle class. Here's the upper class, all right? What class do you want to strive to be in?" All right? Notice up here on the screen. What did Jesus say about our class warfare? He said, "It's covetousness." He said, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things which he possesses." But how do we divide the world up? How do we divide success and failure? By your possessions, by your positions, by your power, all right? What do people sell their souls for? He said, "What shall a man give in exchange for their soul?" Well, in Hebrews chapter 11, we read about Moses. What do people sell their souls for? The passing pleasures of sin. The Bible tells us about Moses by faith. Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh. In other words, he refused the devil's offer, and notice, "Choosing rather to suffer." Again, this is what the devil says. You don't want to suffer this. "Suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy." Notice the key word, "passing." The Bible says, "The world's passing away and the lust thereof." But notice, "The passing pleasures of sin." No matter how much fun it is, no matter how many kicks you get out of it, there's a kickback, all right?

There's a kickback. Now, it's short-term benefit with long-term consequence. It's a temporal pleasure and gain for what? Eternal pain and loss. And I want you to see in 2 Corinthians, the Bible tells us in 2

Corinthians chapter 4, verse 4, "The God of this world has blinded the mind of those who don't believe." Who don't believe.

You remember that Latin phrase, "Carpe diem," all right? Well, that means that have the attitude to make the most of your day, but here's the key afterthought that's part of it.

Don't give much thought to the future. Just worry about today. Well, one of my all-time favorite quotes was made by Charles Kettering. I want you to see it up here on the screen. "We should all be concerned about the future because we will have to spend the rest of our lives there." Do you see the wisdom in that? I'm a short-termer. You're a short-termer. Some of you are a lot longer-termer than I'm going to be, but as we've seen, sometimes death will reach in with his cold hands and take a little baby out of a crib. We never know when it's going to come.

So here's the devil in the details. A key thing the devil always does, and I've seen this with people, they don't want to talk about the future. They don't want to think about the future. How many conversations have you had with people about their souls or about death or about, "Oh, that's an unpleasant subject," or about, "Well, are you ready to die? Do you have your house in order?" and so on and so forth. I want to show you something that reveals our short-sightedness. It was a poll that was made in the Journal of Psychology. They surveyed 160,000 people, and here were their most important personal values, all right?

Fifty-six percent was economic security. Again, we'll see a lot of these, you know, advertised in political times now. Forty-six percent home and family, 25 percent liberty and freedom, 13 percent world peace, 10 percent education, 8 percent religion, 4 percent decency and morality, 2 percent being a good citizen. And here's my question I have up here. Do you see the word "soul" anywhere mentioned? Do you see the word "soul" anywhere mentioned?

Now, let me give you a little silly illustration. Suppose a man falls in love with a girl. That's not the silly part, okay? Falls in love with a girl, asks her to marry him, and she says, "Yes." She says, "Yes." So he goes out, pools his resources, goes to a jeweler, and that jeweler sells him a beautiful, solitary diamond engagement ring. He brings the box to her, says, "I'll be back. I want you to look at it and look at the contents of that." He says, "I'll be back. We'll share in the joy." He comes back.

She says, "Oh, this is just wonderful. Thank you so much." Look at that box. Look at the little latch. You ever seen one of those boxes that have the diamond? It's got the little latches on it in that black, fuzzy material. All this box is so wonderful. Look how it moves and closes so good and nice and

everything. This is just wonderful. And he says, "Well, what about the diamond ring inside?" "Oh, they can take it or leave it." Now that's crazy, but here, the box is your body. The diamond is the soul. What are the majority of people doing with their lives? They're concentrating on the box, aren't they? They're taking care of the box, all right?

They're taking care of the box. They're not caring about the diamond, the soul. They're not. The statistics show that. They don't care about that. They don't keep track of that, and that brings me to my last detail, and here's the good one. And this is the one Jesus, or excuse me, the devil sure don't want you to know, is that Jesus is the victorious Savior King. Notice here in Jesus answered and said to him, "Get thee behind me, Satan." You know, it reminds me of a gal that went to get a dress and was admiring that dress, and her husband said to her, "Why did you wear that dress? I look so good in it." He said, "I would have said to the devil, 'Get thee behind me, Satan.'" She said, "I did," and he said, "I look good from behind, too." Now, that's the way he works, all right?

Notice it is written, hear it again. It's a worship issue. "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only." See, in our worship is our service. One equals one. The other, notice, "And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time," all right? So, what is the lesson here? He's saying, "Don't worship anything but God. Don't serve anything but God," all right?

Jesus gave us the example here, all right? Think about it. Think about the stakes that are at place here. If Jesus had fallen to these temptations, we wouldn't have anything to preach. We'd have no hope. We'd just die, and that would be it. But what? He became our substitute. He became the Lamb. He became the perfect sacrifice. Is there someone who can conquer Satan? Is there someone who can conquer sin? Is there someone who can reverse the curse? All right, the answer, of course, is Jesus. Jesus is the winner. He told us, in fact, when he first appeared and opened the book in the scroll of Isaiah, he said he came to set the captive free, all right? He came to bring newness of life. He came to open blinded eyes, and here's the wonderful news. His victory can become our victory if we'll accept his victory for us, all right?

And then we can be like him, and we can be spirit-filled and spirit-fed and spirit-led if we will follow him. Now, here's a key thing I want to remind you as I wrap this up. Did he go away and leave Jesus alone? Well, he won. I'm done. I know he's the winner. I give up. No. It said he kept coming back. In fact, he kept coming back. You know, Donald Trump has been—tried to kill three times, and I know some have said, "Well, third time's a charm," all

right? Well, I want to tell you, when it came to Jesus—I'm not comparing Donald Trump to Jesus, but what I'm saying here is that he didn't let up, all right? He kept— until finally, what did he do? He entered a man named Judas Iscariot, and what did Judas do? He led, all right, literally the lamb to the slaughter, but what did Jesus say? "I gave my life up willingly," all right? Willingly. So, here he is. He's tempted. We're tempted. He identifies with us, the Bible says. He's went through what we've went through. Now, here's the question I want to ask you. When was the last time—when was the last time that you shed a tear for some soul that's mortgaged to the devil? You know, I've shared it before. I wouldn't be here today without the prayers of people who interceded on my behalf, who cared enough about me. I got saved where I worked on a Friday night, all right, at lunch hour. That's where I got saved, all right? Wasn't in a church setting, wasn't in a pews, an altar, and so on and so forth.

Now, they realized, and now I realize that freedom or enslavement is at stake. Salvation or damnation is at stake. Eternal life or eternal death is at stake. Satan has an agenda to kill, to steal, and destroy, and people don't realize they've already made a pact, and they've already decided they don't really need God, and they don't care about a Savior, and they don't care about the cross, and they don't care about the blood that he shed. What is our opportunity? And the last verses I want to share with you this morning is this. There's a, again, a story told to us, and I want you to see it's about God looking for an intercessor, about him finding an intercessor, and Jesus being an intercessor. Notice in Isaiah 59, it says, "He saw there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor. Therefore his own arm brought salvation for him, and his own righteousness, it sustained him." All right? He was looking, he's looking now.

Notice Psalm, "So he declared he would destroy them, but Moses, his chosen one, stepped between the Lord and the people, and begged him to turn from his anger, and not destroy them." That is the job of an intercessor. Lord, save him, save her, save that family. They don't realize what's at stake. They're deceived, all right? And then notice what, you know, Jesus said on the cross, "It is finished." But we read there's something that isn't finished, and that is his intercession. "Therefore he is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through him." That's what the intercessor is praying for. That's what Jesus is praying for. Notice, "Since he," Jesus, "always lives to make intercession for them." One thing, whether we decide to pray or not, and whether we offer our prayers, and you get a phone call, and the person says, "Hey, we need to pray for Dwight, we need to pray for Dale, we need to pray for the pastor, we need

to pray for Marlon, we need to pray for my lost friend." All right? They're just asking you to do what Jesus is already doing. Stand in the gap like Moses there, all right? Plead, intercede. Again, basically that is what the job of a minister is, and the job of a Christian. Lead, plead, and intercede, and to feed the Word of God. How about you? How about you? Are you willing to serve him that way? Again, I hope you see what's at stake. Don't let the devil deceive you. The devil came down to Victory Baptist Church, all right? All right? Jesus is here, but I tell you what, we don't really get in a fight with the devil. He doesn't mess with us puny people. He's just got some demons that run around that take care of us. But again, who's going to win? Will you? You know, Flip Wilson used to be famous for saying, "The devil made me do it." The devil doesn't make you do anything.