

## How Many Verses is Satan Waiting for You?

It is very likely that we disconnect Matthew chapter 3 from Matthew chapter 4 in our minds. We usually do that with chapters—when we see a division, our minds draw a line of separation. Additionally, there are certain chapters that we have designated their themes into differing categories. Matthew chapter 3 is about “The Baptism of Jesus.” We probably memorized that some time back. Matthew chapter 4 is about “The Temptations of Jesus.” Again, we have that pegged in our minds, and so the two chapters are about two different major events in the life of Christ. And, perhaps they should be separated. But, I want you to look at something that connects them.

Jesus came to John the Immerser to be baptized “to fulfill all righteousness” (**Matt. 3:15**). When He “came up...from the water,” “the Spirit of God” descended and the “voice” of God spoke “from heaven.” Pay attention to His affirmation, “This IS My beloved SON, in whom I am well pleased” (3:17). GOD spoke! He identified Jesus as possessing the nature of God, for He is God (**John 1:1; 5:18; 10:30, 33**). Who would dare test or deny the words of God right on the heels of them being spoken?

Now, ignore the chapter division. Matthew didn’t put it there. Just keep reading. The very next verse (4:1) informs the reader that Jesus was “tempted by the devil.” How would the devil tempt the Son of God? What would he throw at Him first? Notice the first words recorded from Satan in the wilderness. Only three verses after God the Father said, “This IS My beloved Son,” the tempter came to Jesus and said, “IF You are the Son of God...” (4:3). The devil did not waste any time to attempt to plant a seed of doubt—you can almost here the hissing from his lips, “Iffffff...”

So, here’s a question that may sound strange—how many verses does the devil wait in your life before he tries to plant a seed of doubt in your heart regarding the words of God? When you read the words from God that say, “Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth” (**Eph. 4:29**), how many verses is it in your life before the devil tempts you to let a corrupt word out? When you read the words from God that say, “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another” (**Eph. 4:32**), how many verses is it in your life before the devil tempts you to be unkind, hard-hearted and unforgiving? Make that application with every verse of truth and instruction from God. How soon does the devil put you to the test? Friends, don’t give the devil an inch! If he was brash enough to throw it back in Jesus’ face so soon, he will have no problem testing you immediately! RESIST HIM (**Jas. 4:7**)!

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