

## THE TEMPTATIONS OF MINISTRY #3: "Identity and Validity"

Matt 4:3-7

*The temptations were an attack of Jesus identity – his validity for ministry.*

### I. IDENTITY AND VALIDITY

A. Strategy of hell is to challenge our identity: *V3 If you be the son of God...*

1. Questioning his identity: Who you are
2. The issue of identity has to do with authority
  - a. The right to act on God's behalf (police – size is not the issue)

B. Your identity and authority will be challenged

1. The devil will always challenge your right to act on God's behalf
  - a. *Matt 13:55 is this not the carpenter's son...*
  - b. *John 1:46 Can anything good come from Nazareth*
  - c. *John 7:5 even his brothers didn't believe in Him*
2. The devil will always challenge your authority – the right to act on God's behalf
  - a. *Matt 21:23 By what authority are you doing these things – and who gave you this authority*
  - b. That can come from people/devil/from ourselves
    1. *Who's the Pastor here?*
    2. *Maybe I don't have what it takes – maybe I was just excited*

C. The devil tries to set the standards of identity/validity: *You have no validity/your calling is not real unless...*

1. **What you have** (bread)
  - a. Where's all the people
  - b. Building
  - c. Ministries
2. **What you can do:** Throw yourself off the pinnacle... you should be able to do certain things
  - a. *Prayer for the sick*
  - b. *Counseling older people – beyond your experience*
3. **Whether you have attention:** Pinnacle – get people to look at you
  - a. *Stage/microphone vs. unseen service*
  - b. *Invitations to preach outside your own church*

### II. OUTSIDE VOICES

A. The temptation is to take your identity and authority from outside of God

1. V3 the tempter came to him...
  - a. He already knew God's will – had an understanding of God's purpose
2. But the devil ensures that there will come other voices from outside of God's word/will

B. Look at some the voices

1. **Other people's opinions:** The Devil will make sure someone speaks to you – against God's will
  - a. Discouraging brethren: *Deut 1:28 our brethren have discouraged our hearts...*
    1. *JW: Looking out the window – this is what pioneering is going to be like*
    - b. Religious people: *1. You should do this... 2. You should do it like this...*
2. **Worldly standards:** Events – success strategies
3. **Internal weakness:** Some of the tormenting voices come from within
  - a. *I don't feel qualified/ready;*    1. *Moses: Can't speak* 2. *Jeremiah: I'm young*

### III. OVERCOMING THIS TEMPTATION

A. **Survival strategy #1: Ignoring outside voices**

1. I refuse to listen/give my mind to other reference points/opinions - other people's opinions

B. **Survival strategy #2: Referencing off God**

1. *V4/7/10 It is written...*
  - a. Who I am/what I am called to do/what I have the right to do is based on God's word
    - a. *1 Sam 17:45 I come in the name of the Lord of Hosts...*

C. **Survival strategy #3: Trusting God**

1. The problem is when you resist some these voices – things don't immediately change
  - a. *Small building/small crowds/small offerings/small attention*

2. We have to trust God that His will/His way will be better

- a. *Outreach when little response - pray no one else is there - deal with morals even if it costs...*
    1. Believing that in the long-term God is going help me

- b. *Matthew 4:11 Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.*