

**Forty-fifth Street Baptist Church
Life-Groups**



Chapter 23

I. Jesus is baptized in the Jordan River; it is good.

Matthew 3:16-17

- A. At Jesus' baptism the sky ripped open, a voice declared from heaven, "This is my Son whom I love."
- B. But baptism is for sinners, yet the Son of God was baptized. Why?
 - a. God's people were hungry for spiritual reality.
 - b. Jesus, by baptism, identified with God's people, by saying, "It's right for us to do this." Jesus said, "Us."
- C. Jesus' baptism was good.

II. Jesus confronts the devil in the wilderness.

Matthew 4:1-11

- A. Jesus re-enacts the temptation in the Garden of Eden.
- B. Jesus, each time he was tempted, referred to God and to the Word of God.
- C. As the "second Adam," Jesus won the rematch with the devil.
 - a. The Bible makes it plain that the origin of evil is with the devil.
 - b. "Devil" is from the word *diabolos* which comes from a verb which means "to divide."
 - c. The devil, Satan, is not a myth, but a very real being who wants to divide us from God and from one another.
- D. The devil tried to take Jesus out by giving his best punch, but Jesus didn't even blink. Jesus won, and that was scary...scary good.

III. Jesus was confronted by the devil through the religious leaders of the day.

Luke 6:6-11

- A. 6000 Pharisees and Sadducees, jealous of Jesus' impact on people, conspired to have Jesus killed.
 - a. Jesus healed a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath.
 - b. The religious leaders objected and Jesus stared them down with the anger of God because their hearts were hardened.

B. Nicodemus was a notable exception to the hostile religious leaders.

John 3:2-16

- a. Nicodemus, a high-ranking leader, came to Jesus at night and affirmed Jesus as an agent from God.
- b. Jesus responded by telling Nicodemus that he needed to be "born again"—a concept totally foreign to Nicodemus.
- c. This rebirth, like our first birth, is something we have no control over. It is not a mulligan, but miracle of God. It is not a second chance; it is a new beginning.