

# Diligently Seeking God (Hebrews 11:6)

## PRAIRIE VILLAGE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Church Bulletin Articles from July 3, 2011

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### Scripture of the Week



#### Matthew 4:8-11

*“Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, ‘All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘Go, Satan! For it is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.””*

In Matthew chapter four, God has shared with us the famous transaction between Jesus and Satan in the desert, immediately after our Lord’s baptism. Even though Jesus was subjected to the devil’s temptations throughout His life just as we are, we’ve been given a glimpse into some specific ways that Satan tempted Jesus in this passage. Nonbelievers view the concept of Satan as a myth and a scare tactic to help keep the simple-minded religious people of the world in line. Sadly, even many people who claim to believe the Bible, don’t extend that belief to the biblical account of Satan. Some religious liberals view Satan as the representation of evil in the world, and not a lit-

eral, spiritual personality. What we learn from Matthew chapter four is that Jesus certainly believed in the devil, and that Satan is every bit as real as Jesus is. We see the two of them together, engaged in dialogue, quoting Holy Scripture and occupied in a battle of wills. We can find mention of a literal being named “Satan” 55 times in our Bibles, and the word “devil” another 34 times. God takes Satan seriously and so should we. Jesus calls the devil a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44). If he doesn’t really exist, that makes Jesus a liar instead. Most people don’t consider the consequences of dismissing Satan as a fable. If we don’t believe in him, he has us right where he wants us.

### Who is Satan?

The word “Satan” means “adversary, opponent” or “enemy”. The word “devil” means “slanderer, treacherous informer” or “traitor”. We learn so much about Satan just from his name and his descriptions—he is diabolical and evil and vicious. But where did he come from and how did he come to be so cruel and ruthless? The Bible doesn’t give us any specific information about the origins of our adversary, but we can draw some inferences based on some remarkable passages of Scripture. 2 Peter 2:4 says, *“For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment.”* Jude 1:6 says *“And angels who did*

*not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day.”* God created angels and gave them the power of intellect and free will, just like He did with people, and some of the very angels of heaven chose to rebel and sin against God. When they chose evil over righteousness, God punished them by casting them out of the perfection of heaven. Just imagine how foolish it would be to reject heaven after having experienced it first hand! But some angels did just that! Jesus said in Matthew 25:41 that eternal fire has been prepared for the devil and his angels. Jesus tells us of the ultimate destiny of these disobedi-

ent angels with this statement, but He also shows us that the devil was likely the leader of the angels who rebelled against God such a long time ago. It’s amazing to think just how evil the devil has become, but I know that God didn’t create him that way. When God finished His creation, He observed that everything in it was “very good” (Genesis 1:31). God created the angels to be good, but Satan and some of his colleagues just weren’t satisfied with their place and position in God’s perfect order, so they rebelled against Him. Since Satan was defeated and his eternal destiny sealed, his fury, bitterness and jealousy have only intensified into evil of the purest and most deadly form.

**Please Come Visit Us At...**

**Prairie Village Church of Christ**

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**www.pvchurchofchrist.com**

**Times of Services**

**Sunday Morning Bible Study.....9:30**

**Sunday Morning Worship Service.....10:30**

**Sunday Evening Worship Service.....6:30**

**Wednesday Evening Bible Study.....7:30**



**What is Satan’s Mission?**

There are a lot of questions associated with Satan that can be difficult to answer with absolute certainty, but what his mission is, isn't one of them. Satan's objective is to destroy as many people as he possibly can, and take them to hell with him to share in his misery forever. Someone might ask, "What does the devil have against humans?" And while we haven't done a thing to him personally to deserve his wrath, he still has several reasons to be furious with us. First of all, Satan really hates God. He was once an angel who rebelled against God in heaven and that got him kicked out forever. He waged a war against God and he was utterly defeated and will burn in hell for eternity. But, since Satan is completely powerless to bring any harm to God personally, his most obvious targets

for vengeance against the Creator are the very people that God created in His own image. If Satan can't hurt God directly, he will hurt Him indirectly by punishing the creatures that God loves most—that's you and me. The very fact that God created people in His own image, and that we were the crowning achievement of all His creation, is another reason why Satan hates us so much. I don't know if you've ever thought about it, but every good thing that God created was for our benefit, and we share a privileged relationship with Him that no angel in heaven possibly can. Hebrews 1:14 says that angels were created to be ministering spirits to serve us. 1 Peter 1:12 says that even the angels desire to behold the mysteries that God has made known to us in His word. So Satan is just about

as jealous of you and me as anyone could possibly be. The devil is furious and motivated and powerful, but fortunately for us, not nearly as powerful as our Lord. God sent His Son Jesus to this earth to die for us so that we could live with Him in heaven forever. When we sin, we are held captive by Satan and he wants to keep us there forever. But, praise be to God, Jesus was given as a ransom to buy our release (1 Timothy 2:6). Just know for certain that, before we leave this earth, Satan will do everything he can to keep us from going to heaven. Since he can't go back, he doesn't want us going there either. He will try to discourage us, deceive us and tempt us into abandoning our faith. But God promises that if we're faithful until death, He will give us a crown of eternal life (Revelation 2:12).

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**GOSPEL MEETING AUGUST 15-17 WITH GERRY SANDUSKY — Please mark your calendars and make early plans to attend every day of this short, three day meeting with Gerry Sandusky of Madison Indiana. Brother Gerry has entitled this series of studies, "Standing at the Door of the Day of Eternity". Each lesson will be taken from the New Testament book of 1 Thessalonians, and the goal of this meeting will be to motivate each one of us to live every day of our lives on planet earth as if it might be our last.**