

Whose Whispering in Your Ear?

Study Guide

Summary

This sermon explores the great controversy between God and Satan, tracing the conflict from Lucifer's rebellion in heaven through the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness. Bill uses Matthew 4 and Luke 4 to highlight how Jesus faced temptation by quoting Scripture, offering a practical model for believers facing their own spiritual battles. The sermon emphasizes that while the war has been won through Christ, individual battles continue, and Christians must take the enemy seriously without underestimating His influence.

The second major theme addresses fear, particularly fear of the end times. Drawing from Psalm 116, Bill encourages believers to move beyond anxiety about future events by cultivating a deep, personal, and active relationship with Jesus. The central message is that when you truly love Jesus as a close friend and companion, fear loses its grip, and even the most daunting prophetic events become manageable through that relationship.

Key Verses

- Matthew 4:1-3
- Luke 4:1-2
- Luke 4:3-12
- Psalm 116:1-7

Questions

1. Bill described the great controversy as the ongoing war between good and evil, with Satan acting as a spoiler even though the war has already been won. How does understanding this bigger picture change the way you view the daily struggles and temptations in your own life?

2. In Luke 4, Jesus responded to every temptation by quoting Scripture. What does this tell us about the importance of knowing the Bible personally, and what is one practical step you could take this week to engage more deeply with God's Word?
3. Bill pointed out that the devil tempted Jesus for the full 40 days, not just at the end. How does knowing that spiritual attack can be persistent and prolonged affect how you prepare yourself spiritually on a daily basis?
4. The sermon made the point that while Satan cannot take your salvation, he can still cause real harm in your life. How do you balance having a healthy respect for the enemy's power while still walking in confidence as a follower of Jesus?
5. Bill shared that a book read in third grade about end-time persecution left him afraid of the future for years. Have you ever experienced fear or anxiety about end-time events? How have you worked through that, or how are you still working through it?
6. Psalm 116:1-7 (NIV) describes a person who called out to God in deep distress and found that God heard and saved them. Can you share a time when you called on God in a moment of fear or crisis and experienced His faithfulness?
7. Bill said that loving Jesus changes everything, including the things we are afraid of, and that love is a verb requiring action. What does an active, friendship-level love for Jesus look like in your everyday routine, and where do you feel that relationship could grow stronger?
8. The sermon closed with a caution about being too rigid in our prophetic expectations, noting that humans have a 100% failure rate at predicting exactly how prophecy unfolds before it happens. How do you hold your theological convictions about the end times with both confidence and humility?

Life Application

This week, choose one concrete way to deepen your relationship with Jesus as if He were your closest friend. This could mean listening to a chapter of the Bible each day, memorizing one verse that speaks to a fear you are currently facing, or simply setting aside ten minutes each morning to talk to Jesus honestly about what is on your heart. At the end of the week, reflect on whether that intentional time changed how you felt about something you have been anxious or fearful about.

Key Takeaways

- The great controversy is the ongoing battle between God and Satan, and every believer plays a role in that story. The war has been won through Christ, but individual spiritual battles continue until He returns.
- Jesus faced temptation by knowing and quoting Scripture, which means that reading, listening to, and memorizing the Bible is one of the most practical tools a believer has against spiritual attack.
- Christians should not underestimate the devil. While he cannot take your salvation, he is a real and persistent enemy who must be taken seriously with proper spiritual preparation.
- Fear of the future, including end-time events, loses its power when it is replaced by a deep, active, and personal relationship with Jesus. Loving Jesus is a verb, not just a feeling or a church attendance habit.
- Adventists hold specific prophetic beliefs, but humility is important. Leaving room for God to work in ways we may not have anticipated keeps our focus on the relationship with Jesus rather than on the events themselves.