

October 17, 2014

## Jesus and The Temptations

Last Sunday, in the first of a two-part lesson on the Devil and Judson Sunday School, I asked your older elemental, middling and high school students, "Who is Satan?" Their responses varied, everything from "the evil guy in the Bible" to "supreme 'torcherer,'" but my favorite answer was this: "That's the person in our Kid's Day play who was wearing a Red Sox hat." Oops, perhaps this Yankee-loving Grand Poobah of All Things Judson Sunday School has gone too far?

This weekend we will continue our study of all things Satan as we explore the New Testament story of Jesus and the Temptations.



No, not those Temptations, but then again, wouldn't it have been great if Jesus had met up with David Ruffin and Company instead of the Devil?



Jesus meets Motown, are you kidding me? Theology would be so much more fun! Instead of all that overwhelming guilt and fear, we could wear matching suits, learn a few dance steps, and sing hymns like "How Sweet It Is To Be Loved By You." Instead of struggling with virgin births and wise men, our great holiday would be "the third of September, that day I'll always remember," and we'd celebrate Easter by singing, "Papa was a rolling stone."

"Great googaloo, can't you hear me talking to you," Judson Mommas and Poppas?!

If Jesus had met The Temptations, he could have played the Apollo, the Palladium, the Fillmore, and talk about your converts. Just imagine Jesus, down on one knee, reaching out into the crowd and singing:

"I've got a love so deep in the pit of my heart,  
And each day it grows more and more.  
I'm not ashamed to come and plead to you, baby,  
If pleadin' keeps you from walkin' out that door.  
Ain't too proud to beg!"

I have no idea if panties were worn in 30 CE, but whatever the women were wearing back then, they would have been slingin' 'em all over the stage.

Let's face it, nothing much has changed in the past two thousand years:

"People moving out, people moving in.  
Why, because of the color of their skin.  
An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.  
Vote for me and I'll set you free. . . .  
A ball of confusion.  
That's what the world is today, hey, hey."

But, if instead of *resisting* temptation Jesus had *joined* The Temptations, then perhaps there would be less "the last shall be first and the first shall be last" - hunh? - and more,

"Ooh, I bet you're wondering how I knew  
'Bout your plans to make me blue  
With some other guy that you knew before.  
Between the two of us guys,  
You know I love you more."

That'll preach, brothers and sisters. Plus, Jesus could have performed a nifty 360-spin move just before singing.

Indeed, with Jesus as a Temptation, the world becomes a different place. There might just be a new Holy Land - Cleveland - where The Temptations are enshrined in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Of course, this could all be "just my imagination, running away with me."

For your youngest children this Sunday, "The Intangible Gift of Friendship," with *Leonardo the Terrible Monster* by Mo Williams.

And for everyone else, sigh, "Jesus and the Temptations."

Andy  
Grand Poobah