

The Temptations of Jesus - Part 1

Luke

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Bible Text: Luke 4:1-13

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The gospel of Luke chapter four is where we will be in our study this morning and this evening. So if you would please turn there, Luke chapter four. We begin reading with the first verse.

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry.

The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."

And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'"

And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours."

And Jesus answered him, "It is written,
" 'You shall worship the Lord your God,
and him only shall you serve.' "

And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written,

" 'He will command his angels concerning you,
to guard you,'

and

“ ‘On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.’ ”

And Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ”

And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.¹

Let’s ask God’s blessing on his Word.

Lord, now we do turn to you and ask your blessing. We thank you for the ministry of preaching. We thank you that you have chosen to use it and to bless it. Despite the foolishness of it, Lord, from the standpoint of our ability. Our trust in this hour is not in any human vessel, but in you. And so we ask you to teach us, Lord, and to do a work in our hearts. We ask for this in Jesus’ name. Amen.

The Lord Jesus has been baptized and at the time of his baptism the Father has given supernatural testimony as to the true identity of Jesus of Nazareth, that this is, indeed, the Son of God. The heavens were open. The Spirit of God descended and rested upon him in the form of a dove. And a voice was heard from heaven, the Father’s voice made audible to men:

“This is my Son. I am well pleased with him.”

Well, immediately following this high point of divine revelation and divine testimony concerning Jesus, the Bible tells us one of the most amazing things we ever read about the life of the Son of God on this earth. He was led by the Spirit in the wilderness and there he was tempted by the devil for 40 days. And when we read about these three specific temptations in Luke chapter four, also in Matthew’s gospel, what we have is really just the climax of 40 days of temptation. He has been tempted throughout the entire period of time and now these are the three closing temptations, the climactic temptations.

The thought that God’s Son could be tempted by Satan is an amazing thing to reflect on and to think about. One of the things I immediately have to consider as we come to this chapter is what is Luke’s purpose? The Holy Spirit guiding the writer, what is Luke’s purpose for giving us this record of the temptation? As I said, Matthew gives us the record as well. Mark just mentions it. He doesn’t go into the detail of it. What is Luke’s purpose?

A couple of things have been offered. You know, one some have said there is a comparison here, a contrast between Jesus and the nation of Israel. You have Israel wandering about in the wilderness for 40 years. An entire generation dies out. They were tested in the wilderness and they failed. Jesus is tested in the wilderness and he is faithful.

¹ Luke 4:1-13.

One of the reasons why this comparison is brought to mind is because when Moses was sent to Pharaoh to tell him to let the people of Israel go, Israel as a nation is referred to as the Lord's first born son. Exodus 4:22:

Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD, Israel is my firstborn son, and I say to you, "Let my son go that he may serve me." If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son.'"²

That language might not be enough to draw our attention to the comparison except for the fact that when Satan comes to Jesus in his temptation and tempts him to turn a stone into bread, Jesus answers him with Scripture. He says:

"It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'"³

Well, he is quoting a passage from the book of Deuteronomy chapter eight. As the children of Israel are warned about their past disobedience in the wilderness, Deuteronomy 8:1, the Bible says:

The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers. And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.⁴

And so Jesus when he is tempted in the wilderness with hunger he answers the temptation with Scripture taken from the book of Deuteronomy that addresses Israel's failure in the wilderness. So you have Israel, the first born son of God failing in the wilderness. You have the unique and only Son of God being faithful in the wilderness and tempted with respect to his hunger.

There is another comparison that comes to mind when we look at the temptation and that is with Adam. It is interesting, isn't it, that when Luke gives the genealogy of Jesus through the line of Mary that he traces the lineage all the way back to Adam and when he ends with Adam it says, "Adam, son of God," not in the same sense, of course, that Jesus is the Son of God, but Adam, son of God. And then you think about Adam's failure. And you think about Christ's saving work. And the Bible, the New Testament makes this comparison in terms of the first Adam and the last Adam, the first man, the one in whom

² Exodus 4:22-23.

³ Luke 4:4.

⁴ Deuteronomy 8:1-3.

sin entered the world and death as a result of sin and then the representative man, the God man who came to save his people from their sins.

1 Corinthians 15:45.

“Thus it is written, ‘The first man Adam became a living being’; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.”⁵

So there Paul is drawing this comparison. Again, the book of Romans chapter five verse 14.

“Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.”⁶

And in some way serves as a type of the Lord Jesus. The first Adam, the last Adam.

Adam was tempted in a paradise. Jesus was tempted in a wilderness. Adam had no lack when he was tempted. Jesus had not eaten for 40 days and he was hungry when he was tempted. Adam yielded to the first temptation that he faced. Jesus did not yield despite multiple temptations. Notice what it reads here in verse one.

“And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil [for 40 days].”⁷

As I said, the last three are just the climax. So Adam yields to the first one. Jesus does not yield despite multiple temptations. Adam never felt the full force of temptation because he yielded. Jesus knew the full force of temptation because he did not yield. He was faithful. Adam’s failure meant the death for those whom he represented. Jesus’ faithfulness meant salvation for those whom he represented.

And so when you look at Luke four you might think about Israel. You might think about Adam and think about the superiority of the Son of God with respect to the failure of Israel and the failure of Adam.

But I really don’t think that is the main thought here. Those may be secondary matters that somewhere are operating behind the scenes, but the primary matter is this. What is being put on display in Luke chapter four is that Jesus is, indeed, the Son of God and the Son of man and in every way he was perfectly obedient as the Son of God and as the Son of man, as the God man, because these three temptations uniquely are geared for the Son of God.

In fact, at the very beginning Satan acknowledges his unique identity as the Son of God with the very first temptation when he says, “If you are the Son of God.” And, of course,

⁵ 1 Corinthians 15:45.

⁶ Romans 5:14.

⁷ Luke 4:1-2.

he doesn't mean, if, as if that is in question. But since you are the Son of God, since I know you are the Son of God, then this is what you ought to do. And so the Son of God is being tested and proven in these wilderness temptations.

Now this morning what I want us to do is just sort of take a big picture view of verses one through 13. We are just going to stand back from it and look at it as a whole. I want to point out two main thoughts, the uniqueness of the temptations of Jesus and the second thought is the commonness of the temptations of Jesus, how his temptations were unique and how his temptations are... were common as... in terms of what we face as well. And then tonight we are going come back and we are just going to walk through it and look at some details, especially tonight focusing on the tempter and his strategies and how our Savior gives to us in his response to Satan the road that we must travel if we are going to live obedient lives in the face of all of our temptations.

But first I want to talk about the uniqueness of the temptations of Jesus. Forty days in the wilderness, 40 days of fasting. And right away when we think about that number 40 and we think about going without food, a couple of major Old Testament figures that come to mind. In 1 Kings chapter 19 when Elijah is fleeing from Jezebel he is hungry. The Lord feeds him. And the Bible says that on the strength of that food he traveled 40 days to Mount Horeb and there the Lord met with him and taught him some lessons. But you have Elijah for 40 days apparently going on the strength of those 40 days on food that he ate, so 40 days of fasting.

Then you have Moses in Exodus 34 who fasted for 40 days when the Lord was revealing to him his law, giving him commandments.

So here is the Son of God, the Father leads him by the Spirit throughout the wilderness and for 40 days he doesn't have food. For 40 days he is fasting. And so you think about Elijah. You think about Moses. And now you think about Jesus. And what is being put on display in Luke four is the superiority of Jesus, someone greater than Elijah. Someone greater than Moses is here. And, in fact, that is exactly what is revealed later on in the transfiguration of Jesus before his disciples.

Mathew 17:3:

And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."⁸

He is not just another one in the line of Elijah and Moses. This is God's Son. So the 40 days of fasting bring to mind Elijah and Moses, but this is someone greater. And that gets to the purpose for which he is being tested here.

⁸ Matthew 17:3-5.

And I know you know this, but I just want to say it. When we talk about temptation, that comes from Satan. We talk about testing, that is allowed by and it is determined by, its purpose is driven by God. And you can have temptation and testing going on in the same circumstances from Satan's point of view it is meant as a temptation that is to entice someone to fall, but from God's point of view it is putting on display the unique character of this person and the work of God in his or her life.

So he is led, Jesus is led by the Spirit into these circumstances. He is there in the midst of this perfectly obedient life. It is by God's design that he is in the wilderness. It is by God's design that he is going to face Satan. So from God's vantage point, this is a scene, this is a stage upon which he is going to prove, demonstrate something about his Son. From Satan's point of view, these are temptations. This is the attempt to see the Son of God fall.

So a unique purpose is being worked out here in the temptations of Jesus. His unique identity is put on display. His perfect obedience is put on display. In fact, this time of testing when you look at it as a whole, it demonstrates something about his entire mission. It is taking place at the beginning of his ministry. And it is going to demonstrate something about the whole of his ministry.

Let me point out a few things. Number one, it demonstrates that his mission required his humanity. We could not have been saved apart from God taking to himself the second person of the trinity, taking to himself a real human nature. The incarnation had to happen. God had to come and be with us. Immanuel, God with us. This had to happen in the person of Jesus if we were to be saved. He was really a man. He was really human. And this temptation, these temptations prove that.

Number one, we see that he was hungry. God doesn't get hungry. But men get hungry. And after 40 days the Bible says, the end of verse two:

“And when they were ended, he was hungry.”⁹

He is hungry. He is led by the Spirit. He is full of the Spirit. The Bible says in verse one:

“And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit...”¹⁰

The idea of saturation, permeation. Interesting. This language is not just used of Jesus. This same language is used, for example of Stephen, full of the Spirit. And others throughout the New Testament. And so we are reminded that Jesus lived his human life on this earth in the power of the Spirit, led by the Spirit, full of the Spirit, but to a perfect degree, always in every way. His life empowered by, led by, explained by the Holy Spirit's presence and activity.

⁹ Luke 4:2.

¹⁰ Luke 4:1.

Though Satan knew him to be the Son of God—and he does know this—he still deals with Jesus like a man in these temptations. He has the audacity to offer to Jesus the possibility of gaining the whole world by bowing his knee to Satan’s authority.

You don’t offer God anything. He doesn’t need anything. But he offers to Jesus something. So in the temptations he is dealing with Jesus, though he knows Jesus to be the Son of God. He is dealing with Jesus like a man. Jesus is really human.

There is something else about the purpose for these temptations, the uniqueness of it. His mission required an answer for the first man’s failure.

See, I want to go back for a moment to the idea that you see in the temptation something that draws our mind back to Adam. This is a part of what this is all about. It is not the primary thing, but it is real that Jesus has come because of the first man’s failure, because Adam fell and we all fell with him. Now the last Adam must come. Jesus must come in order to be the head of a new human race, a redeemed human race. He must save his people from their sins. He must deliver us from the effects of the first man’s failure.

Romans 5:18 says:

“Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.”¹¹

All in Adam fell when he fell. All in Christ are redeemed by his one act of righteousness.

“For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.”¹²

So there is this thing going on where Adam’s fall affects all of us and any who are to be saved out of that fallen human race must be saved by the work of the last Adam, by the head of a new human race, a redeemed human race, the Redeemer himself, Jesus Christ.

The fact that he is being tempted speaks to the fact that if he fails, if he falls, we are doomed. The first Adam did fail. This last Adam must pass the test. And he does. But also we are right to think in our minds about Israel. Again, wilderness, 40 days versus 40 years, the specific temptation with respect to hunger, the answer from Deuteronomy chapter eight. Because Jesus has come, not only because of one man’s failure, but because of all of our failure. We see failure not just in Adam, we see failure in Israel. We see failure in the entire human race.

It is not just Adam’s sin that must be answered for, but all of our sins. And so Israel failed the test in the wilderness, but Jesus would pass the test in the wilderness.

¹¹ Romans 5:18.

¹² Romans 5:19.

You see, the purpose for which he is being tested is unique. What is being put on display, what we are being reminded of is the fact that the death of Jesus only saves because of the life of Jesus. Without the life of Jesus the death of Jesus would have had no saving power. He lived for us before he died for us. If he is not a sinless Savior, he is not a Savior at all. This is why the Bible is so careful to tell us he was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. He must be the spotless Lamb of God if he is going to take away our sins.

But it is not just the purpose of these temptations that makes them unique. Also the manner in which he is tested. He was tested as the perfect Son of man. I mean, he was tested, he was tempted in a way as a man unlike our temptations.

You say, “How is the tempting of Jesus unlike the way that you and I are tempted?”

Well, how many of you know that every one of our temptations as believers, every one of our temptations is regulated by God. Did you know that? Did you know you never face an unregulated temptation? And as God regulates your temptations, do you know what he measures that by? Do you know how he regulates it? He regulates it in accordance with your capacity. I mean, based upon his perfect knowledge of you, based upon his perfect knowledge of your spiritual maturity, based upon all that he knows, he regulates every temptation in this way. What is your capacity in terms of being able to pass the test?

Richard, where do you get that from?

1 Corinthians 10:13.

“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”¹³

Now, folks, let that sink in. What that means is you are never faced with a temptation that you do not have the capacity to pass it. You are never faced with a temptation that God has not already made a way for you to escape it, which means that where you, wherever I am falling into sin, we are fully responsible. We cannot say, “Well, I couldn’t pass that test. It was just too strong for me.”

Listen. You would not have faced that temptation at all if you did not have the capacity to pass it.

But this also means something else. It means that God has never allowed you and me to face the full power of Satanic temptation. Satan is more powerful than we are. And if God allowed Satan to unleash the full power of temptation upon us, we could not withstand it.

¹³ 1 Corinthians 10:13.

So God regulates all of our temptations. But now let me ask you a question. What was the Lord Jesus' capacity? He is not just the Son of Man. He is also the Son of God. You have a real human nature, but in this one person you have a real divine nature. God in human flesh. Was Jesus capable of sinning? This is the question that theologians talked about forever. Did Jesus have the capacity to sin?

Well, the answer is no. The reason why the answer is no, because he wasn't just the Son of Man. He was also the Son of God in one person. We cannot envision a situation in which you had the possibility of the divine nature being involved in sin. God doesn't sin. And there was no way for the person Jesus to sin without involving the divine nature in that since he is God. So, no, he did not have the capacity to sin. But his temptations were real. And in a way that I cannot fully comprehend and I cannot in any way pretend to exhaust the mystery of it, but what this meant was his human nature was exposed to temptation in a way like yours and mine will never be because there was no end to his capacity.

So the full force of Satanic temptation was felt in the human nature of the Son of God. This is why some of these temptations without the sustaining power of God would have killed him before the cross.

Mark 14:34, as he is in the garden and he is grieving. At one point he falls down under the weight of what he is facing and in Mark 14:34 he says to his disciples:

“My soul is very sorrowful, even to death.”¹⁴

“I am so sorrowful that I am near death. Remain here and keep watch.”

So he is tested as the perfect Son of Man and his temptations are the full barrage of what Satan has to offer because the limitations in terms of his human nature, he has unlimited capacity for obedience and, therefore, he faces the full weight of temptation in a way that we haven't.

At the same time he is tested as the perfect Son of God in ways that you and I will never be tempted. Have you ever been tempted to turn a stone into bread? Have you? Why not? You don't have the capacity to do it. Did Jesus have the capacity to do it? Have you ever been tempted to go to the highest point of the temple complex and dive off into the Kidron Valley below because there is a messianic promise in the psalms that God will preserve your life? No, that is unique to the Son of God. Have you ever been transported in a moment to a place where you can survey the kingdoms of the world and the whole world has been offered to you if you would just bow your knee and acknowledge Satan's authority over those kingdoms? Is there any mere mortal, is there any human being who will ever be offered such things besides the Son of Man, besides the Son of God?

¹⁴ Mark 14:34.

Absolutely not. And so we recognize in this record of the temptations that the Son of God is being put on display by the uniqueness of what he is facing. It speaks to his mission.

But also I want us to see the commonness of the temptations of Jesus. You see, here is what we have in common with what he faced. First of all, we will face temptation. We read it a moment ago, 1 Corinthians 10:13.

“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”¹⁵

That entire set of statements there, it all assumes the fact that we will be tempted and you will be. All in the sovereignty of God, all as you are led by the Spirit, even as you are living an obedient life. You are going to come to these places where through satanic activity a temptation is put before you, an offer for sin, an enticement to sin. And at that very moment, not only will you be being tempted, but you will be tested, because in that moment there is the way of escape, there is the opportunity for obedience and in that way the work of God in your life can be put on display.

We face temptations daily. And in a myriad of areas temptations, when it comes down, we think about things. You know, beloved, do you recognize the Word of God even instructs us about what we are to think.

Whatsoever is love, whatsoever is... you know the passage. Think on these things. This is what we are called to think about.

Do we yield to sin sometimes in our thinking? We don't even recognize there is a temptation going on there in terms of how we are thinking about things and we just yield to thoughts that don't glorify the Lord, are not good for us, are not true, are not right, are not lovely, are not pure, are not healthy. And we yield to these thoughts.

Oh, you have an opportunity today to think thoughts that please the Lord. We face temptations when it comes to our tongue, what we are going to say. Is God concerned about what we say? Is he concerned about what comes out of our mouths? How easy it is just to begin to talk and we don't even give thought to what we are saying, the impact, the power of our words. The Bible says that life and death is wrapped up in the smallest of our members that is so hard to control.

Yes, God is concerned about what we say. And so we face not only opportunities for sin with respect to our speech, but we have opportunities to put God's work in our lives on display with words that are full of grace and impart blessing to the hearer and build up other people. We have those choices every day. Every day we face temptations when it comes to our attitudes. We are commanded to be joyful. We have been talking about that in the book of Philippians and how what commandment can be obeyed and honored. And there are negative attitudes that we are warned about, bitterness, jealousy, envy hatred,

¹⁵ 1 Corinthians 10:13.

things, again, that people just sort of yield to without even recognizing it. All of the sudden a root of bitterness develops in a person's life. There is this sort of buried anger that is there and they don't deal with it in obedient fashion. And then they wonder why their whole perspective changes about everything in life.

And we are going to face temptations every day. There are physical temptations, temptations when it comes to sexual immorality, temptations when it comes to other things that don't glorify the Lord and don't benefit us. We are going to face temptations. Jesus did and we will.

There is another thing we have in common, not only will we face temptation, we are going to face the tempter.

Recognize this. Satan—we are going to talk about this more tonight—Satan is not a myth, is he? This is not just sort of the personification of a principle of evil. Let's just put a name on it and a face on it and call it Satan. No. Satan is a person, a creature, Lucifer, created by God originally good, but through pride, as Isaiah 14 describes it, he falls and he is really at work in this world. He tempts. The devil, Luke refers to him as.

“The evil said to him...”¹⁶

Verse three.

In Matthew's gospel he is called the tempter.

Matthew 4:3.

“And the tempter came and said to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.’”¹⁷

The tempter. What is interesting about that is in 1 Thessalonians 3:5, now Paul was writing to the Thessalonian church. He is just writing to believers. He says this.

“For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain.”¹⁸

Do you recognize the tempter who tempted Jesus is the tempter who tempts you? He is still at work in this world. I am afraid we have churches. I am afraid, perhaps, even this church is full of believers who don't give any real thought to the fact that we have a very real spiritual enemy. We take sin lightly as if our yielding to temptation is no big deal. We don't recognize there is a tempter who has a destructive purpose standing behind every offer he makes to you.

¹⁶ Luke 4:3.

¹⁷ Matthew 4:3.

¹⁸ 1 Thessalonians 3:5.

I have said it to be people before and just in trying to illustrate this. You know, name a serial killer. You know, when I was growing up Charles Manson was the name that everybody identified with. How many of you know who Charles Manson was, is?

I would say to people, "Listen. Would you sit down with Charles Manson and take his counsel?" Charles Manson is going to give you counsel for your marriage today. Are you buying in? Young people, he is going to give you counsel for your dating life. He is going to give you counsel for the way you dress. He is going to give you counsel for the way you live your life. Charles Manson is going to be your counselor. Would you listen to him?

Now, folks, listen to me. There is not a person in this room who is sane who would take Charles Manson's counsel. Would you agree with that? Well, there is someone much worse than Charles Manson. He inspired Charles Manson. Charles Manson belongs to his kingdom and it is that person who stands behind every single temptation offer you receive. The thoughts you are tempted to think that don't agree with Scripture, the words you are tempted to say that don't agree with Scripture, the attitudes you are tempted to hold on to that don't agree with Scripture, the behavior that doesn't agree with Scripture, who is encouraging that, but the destroyer, the liar, the murderer, the tempter? Why are you listening to him? Do you recognize how dangerous he is? We are going to face the tempter.

Now there is one unique thing, though, that is a little bit different with the temptation of Jesus. There is no doubt but that he was facing Satan personally. I mean, this temptation came directly from Satan. In most of our cases, I don't know that if anybody in this room, I don't know this, because I ... we can't peer behind the curtain. I just don't know that any of us have ever faced Satan directly. But we know this. There is a whole host of fallen angels. The Bible identifies them as demons so that we can truly say we have faced the tempter through this organization of evil that is all over this world system. So we do face satanic temptations through demonic suggestions every day. In fact, all false doctrine is satanic in origin. They are called in the New Testament, doctrines of demons.

So Satan is at work in the religious world. He is at work in the political world. He is at work in the behavioral world, the moral culture that we live in. He is at work throughout all and here we are, the people of God, rescued out of the domain of darkness. We are going to face temptations from the tempter and he gets to the third point. How is there a commonness here? Well, just as Jesus was victorious over these temptations, God's people, his people, Christ's people can be victorious.

If God is regulating your temptations according to your ability and gives you a way of escape every time you have been saved. You are no longer a citizen of the kingdom of darkness. You are no longer a slave of sin. You no longer walk according to the course of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that works in the sons of disobedience. That is not you anymore. That means you have the capacity, the ability and the opportunity to obey God in the face of every temptation.

You and I could choose obedience in the power of the Spirit. We can.

James 4:7 says:

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”¹⁹

He will flee.

Did Satan eventually depart from this scene? Isn't that what verse 13 said? Look there. Verse 13.

“And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.”²⁰

Now get this. He doesn't go away forever, does he? Until an opportune time.

But according to God's promise and recognizing God rules over everything, these temptations are regulated in such a way that if we submit to God and resist the devil, eventually he goes. You didn't have to yield, friend. If you had submitted to God and continued to resist Satan he would have left. He is bound to, which gets to the last thought this morning and another way that our temptations are common with Jesus we are going to face temptation also. We are going to face the tempter also. We can know victory also. Here is the fourth thought. We must approach the tempter in the same way that Jesus did.

This is the wonderful nature of the fact that Jesus is tempted as the Son of God, but in a way he is also tempted as the Son of Man at the same time because he is one person, so that what Jesus did is an example for us.

How do you meet with temptation? Well, first of all, the fullness of the Spirit. Jesus is facing these temptations, verse one, as he is full of the Holy Spirit. This is the only way you can live an obedient life in this world. We are commanded in the book of Ephesians chapter five to be being filled with the Spirit, Ephesians 5:18, to be being filled with the Spirit. Colossians three says we are to be saturated with the Word of God. And so as we are saturated with the Word of God, submitted to the Word of God...

“Submit yourselves, therefore, unto God.”²¹

As we are committed to obeying God's Word in that way the Spirit of God fills, permeates, leads, controls our lives. And now we are ready to face temptation. But only when we are yielded to the Lord, only then.

¹⁹ James 4:7.

²⁰ Luke 4:13.

²¹ James 4:7.

Second, not only the fullness of the Spirit, but the knowledge of Scripture. Here is the Son of God living his life in the power of the Spirit as a man on this earth and he is faced with the tempter's offers and in every single case he answers with Scripture.

Verse four.

“And Jesus answered him, ‘It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone.””²²

Verse six.

“And Jesus answered him, ‘It is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.””²³

And when Satan twists Scripture in this third offer, verse 12:

“And Jesus answered him, ‘It is said, “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.””²⁴

He takes Scripture and interprets Scripture and in that way sets it in its right context and in its right perspective, puts Satan in his place.

Can I say to you? You will not live a faithful, obedient Christian life if you don't know God's Word. You have not hope of looking at life the right way, understanding what God's will is for your life and obeying his will if you don't know his will. And we know his will from not our emotions, not our circumstances, not the counsel of others who aren't thinking in terms of Scripture. We will only know what God wants for us to do in a given situation when we know Scripture.

It is written, it is said, needs to be what comes out of our mouths. It is written, it is said. This must dominate our thinking, dominate our hearts, dominate our behavior, dominate our decisions. What does the Bible say?

So there is the fullness of the Spirit. There is the knowledge of Scripture. Third, there is the complete faith in the character and wisdom of God. When you say, “No, here is the decision I am going to make, here is how I am going to think, here is how I am going to feel, here is what I am going to say, here is how I am going to behave because it is written,” what you are saying is, “I believe God's wisdom above every wisdom. I believe his will above ever desire that I might have in sin. I trust that God loves me. I trust that he is perfectly wise. I believe that his way is the only way that is life. His way is always the best and so therefore despite all the voices in the world that would head me off in another direction, despite all the bents that I might have or inclinations toward some other direction, I am going to go with this. It is written.”

²² Luke 4:4.

²³ Luke 4:8.

²⁴ Luke 4:12.

And what you are saying is, “I trust him. I trust the character of God. That is why I listen to him.”

Why wouldn't you listen to Charles Manson? Maybe he is not trustworthy. Do you think? But why would you listen to God? Is he not only trustworthy? Is he not perfectly trustworthy?

What is put on display in Luke four? Well, Jesus the Son of God and the Son of Man passes the test. He had to live for us before he could die for us. Without perfect obedience his death could not deliver us from our sins. He was tempted in all points as are we, but he did not sin. Adam failed, but Jesus didn't fail. Israel failed, but Jesus didn't fail. We have all failed, but Jesus didn't fail. Salvation is found in him. But at the same time for those who trusted him and know him, now there is a pattern. Now there is a model for us as we think about the temptations we face and how we must deal with those temptations, because we are going to face them. We are going to face the tempter, but we can know victory in the midst of those temptations and we know victory as we walk in the fullness of the Spirit, as we know the Word of God and as we trust our God's Word.

Tonight we are going to come back and begin to dig into the details of it.

Let's bow together for prayer.

Father in heaven, thank you for your Word. It is sweet for our hearts. Thank you for our Savior who lived for us and died for us, was raised for us and now even intercedes for us. He is our life. He is our salvation. We thank you that his death atoned for even the sins that we commit now as believers when we are not wise and foolish and we yield to temptation. Your Son and your Son alone can explain our right standing with you. But, Lord, we, your people, desire to obey you and desire to live lives that please you. And so I pray that we would hear what we have seen this morning, really receive it into our hearts and walk in it. Forgive us, Lord, when we have been yielding to sinful thoughts, sinful attitudes, sinful words, sinful deeds. Wherever there is any believer in this place abiding in sin at this moment, I pray that they would recognize it and repent of it and turn from it and be delivered from the fowler's snare, be delivered from the schemes of Satan. We are not ignorant of his schemes. We ask you to protect you people in this way, Lord. Please shepherd your sheep we ask and we know you will. We know you have. In Jesus' name. Amen.