

Luke Series #2

"Dealing With The Devil" - Luke 4:1-13

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Temptation

1. A mother walked into the kitchen one afternoon to discover her 3 year old daughter, sitting on the counter, eating cookies
2. The little girl had been told not to touch them, so she hurriedly came up with an excuse
3. "I just climbed up to smell them and my tooth got caught."
4. Another child was asked by his Sunday School teacher to say the Lord's Prayer for class one day
 - a. the little boy did quite well remembering the prayer but when he came to the line about temptation he said, "And lead us not into temptation," then paused and said, "because we can find the way there all by ourselves."
5. Indeed we can
6. Because we are fallen men and women, living in a fallen world which is steeped in sin, temptation surrounds us
7. And while a large part of the temptations we experience arise from our own lusts -
8. We need to recognize that there is also a vast spiritual realm that encourages temptation

B. Today

1. Want to see how to deal with the devil and the temptations he brings
2. Want to learn how to overcome temptation
3. Will take a look at Jesus' Temptation in the wilderness
4. The first 13 verses of Luke 4 have a lot to tell us
 - a. there are many different directions we could come at this passage
 - b. today, want to concentrate on what this passage teaches us about how WE can overcome temptation

II. TEXT

A. Vs. 1-2

1 Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,
2 being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry.

1. At end of Ch. 3, Jesus baptized
2. Came out of water, HS descended, Father spoke
3. "You are My beloved Son. In You I am well-pleased."
4. After this, being filled with the HS, Jesus went into the wilderness for 40 days
5. For entire time, He fasted
 - a. for the first few days of a fast, you feel hunger very keenly
 - b. but after a week, the sensation of hunger goes away
 - the stomach shrinks
 - gets used to being empty of food
 - so hunger pains, those little reminders it's time to eat, stop
 - also, your metabolism slows down, less demands for energy
 - c. but after about 40 days, the body has run out of stored up

energy and it starts to break down tissue

d. at this point, a person starts to feel hunger again

- but this hunger is different

- not like mere hunger pains

- this is hunger torment

- they are starting to starve to death

e. this is the point Jesus was at after 40 days

6. It was in this critical state that the devil came to Jesus with the first temptation . . .

B. Vs. 3-4

3 And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."

1. Jesus just baptized - voice from heaven, "You are My beloved Son!"

2. "If" not conditional, like "Are you the Son of God?"

3. Better understood as "Since You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."

a. there are stones all over the ground there

b. devil probably picked one up and held it before Jesus

c. pointed to it and said, "Here - this one should do."

4. Jesus is hungry -

a. knows it is the hunger that precedes death

b. this temptation was real

c. as God He could very easily have spoken the word and the stone would have become a nice hot loaf

d. after all, He had provided manna for the Jews in the wilderness for 40 years

e. here, after 40 days without food, why not exercise His power and make Himself a snack?

4 But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'"

5. The way Jesus dealt with this temptation has much to teach us about how we are to deal with it as well

6. In i John 2, we learn that all temptation can be divided into three categories:

a. the lust of the flesh

b. the lust of the eyes

c. the pride of life

7. The devil hits Jesus with all 3 forms in the 3 temptations he brings here in the wilderness

8. This first one was an appeal to the lust of the flesh

a. the passions and drives associated with our bodies

b. and here we see one of the most basic ones = hunger

c. the devil was trying to get Jesus to center His life on the material realm

- to define His existence in terms of pleasure

- in terms of taking care of Himself physically

d. but Jesus reminds him that life is not just about the physical

e. we are also spirit

f. Man does NOT live by physical bread alone

g. if he is to know real life, he must also trust completely in

God and learn to feed on His faithfulness

9. The vast majority of people today think that life is about obtaining physical comfort

a. but they never find the satisfaction they are looking for

b. because their real need is spiritual

c. they are trying to fill their inner emptiness with things

d. what they need is Jesus

e. Augustine, "You have made us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee."

10. What is sad to see is so many Christians who have fallen into the what I call the "Croissant Trap"

a. they are believers, but they are restless and seeking to satisfy themselves by consuming

b. when we come to Jesus, that is not the end of the journey

c. no, it has just begun

d. rest, peace, fulfillment, and satisfaction are not found in the abundance of possessions

e. they are found in Christ

f. don't fall in to the "croissant trap"

g. remember what Jesus said, "Man really lives by the word of God."

C. Vs. 5-8

5 Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.

7 "Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours."

1. As the Messiah Jesus had come to reclaim the lost dominion of man

2. When Adam fell, he plunged all mankind into slavery to sin and effectively turned dominion of earth over to the devil

3. This is why the bible calls satan the prince of this world, the god of this age, the prince of the power of the air

4. His kingdom is seen in the world system which is opposed to God and resists righteousness

5. The mission of the Messiah was to come and liberate planet earth from the death grip of the devil

6. And because this world's system opposes God, the Messiah's mission would be one of suffering and difficulty

7. So here we see the devil offering Jesus a short cut

a. he takes Jesus up to a high vantage point

b. much like a real estate agent will take a prospective buyer to a scenic spot and then make his pitch

c. in a moment of time, all the kingdoms of the world flash before Jesus' eyes

d. as He looked, no doubt Jesus saw all the pain, evil, and suffering that humanity has had to endure because of the devil's sadism

e. He had come to set man free from all that

- he had come to heal

- to replace night with light

- to banish evil and set up everlasting righteousness

- f. and now the devil was offering Him a shortcut
 - why go the way of suffering?
 - why not put your plan into action right now?
 - instead of facing persecution and hatred from these kingdoms
 - why not receive their praise and glory?
- 8. Like the first temptation, this was very real
 - a. Jesus did not argue with the devil and tell him he had no right or authority to offer these kingdoms
 - b. no friends, this temptation was very real
 - c. in fact, we read in Revelation that one day the devil will indeed turn over the kingdoms of this world to a man
 - d. we call him the antichrist
- 9. In Psalm 2 we read that one day, at the end of history, Jesus is to be given the kingdoms of this world
- 10. Satan knew that, and now he simply offers Jesus a shortcut

8 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"

- 11. From the beginning, satan has longed to take God's place and receive worship
- 12. But Jesus knew the command that only God was to be worshipped
- 13. It's interesting that the devil said nothing about service, but Jesus did
 - a. he said, "You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve."
 - b. Jesus knows that whatever we worship we also serve
 - c. service to the Lord is true freedom
 - d. but service of satan is cruel bondage
- 14. Satan was trying to offer Jesus a shortcut to glory that bypassed suffering
- 15. But Jesus knew the only true path to glory lies through suffering
- 16. Jesus was wise enough to know that the devil is a liar and never keeps his promise
 - a. He promises satisfaction through temptation and sin
 - b. but once we bite we find we've been sold a bill of spoiled goods
- 17. Friends, there is no shortcut to glory; there is no easy way to holiness
 - a. because we live in a fallen world and are ourselves fallen,
 - b. our path lies through suffering, just as Jesus did
 - c. all of the NT writers speak of this
 - d. RR = 1 Peter 5:10
- 18. We live in an age of the quick fix; instant answer
 - a. we've come to think that we have a right to a painless life
 - b. that any trouble that comes our way must be fled from any way we can
 - c. the great success of psychotherapy over the last 15 years is the result of the idea that anything that troubles us can and should be removed from our lives
 - d. where then is the NT teaching of the fact that our path to glory lies through suffering?
 - e. if we are to exempt our lives from suffering, then what do we do with God's word?

19. Here is how Jesus dealt with this temptation to take a shortcut through life: He turned His attention to God

- a. he said that we are to Worship God alone
- b. we are not to put our own self interests first
- c. we are not to worship ourselves
- d. no, we are to worship and serve God
- e. and as we do, He will direct our paths, our lives, and our deliverance from suffering

20. This temptation was a powerful appeal to the lust of the eyes

- a. in a moment of time, Jesus saw all the kingdoms of the world
- b. their wealth, power, glory
- c. and the devil offered it all to Jesus, if He would only bow down and worship him
- d. even so, you and live in world that is constantly enticing us with its goodies
 - advertising
 - mall
 - neighbors & friends
- e. but here is the sad thing, the eye is never satisfied
 - it takes in and takes in
 - and still wants more
 - Eccl 1:8 "The eye is not satisfied with seeing, Nor the ear filled with hearing."
- f. we must learn to turn our gaze from things below to heaven above
- g. As Paul says in Col. 3:2, "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth."

D. Vs. 9-12

9 Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here.

10 "For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you,'

11 "and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'"

1. The Temple Mount overlooks the Kidron Valley next to Jerusalem
 - a. in fact, the Mount itself was not big enough to hold the temple structure, so they had enlarged the Mount by building huge walls on the edge of the cliff.
 - b. the pinnacle of the temple was the highest point on this wall that overlooked the valley
 - c. Josephus tells us that it was so high, to look down made you dizzy
2. The traffic at the foot of this wall, thru the valley was always tremendous with hundreds of people walking by
3. We know that at this time, the popular idea of the Messiah was that He would come in great glory and power
4. In fact, the rabbis had taught the people that he would come in the glory of the clouds and alight on the roof of the Royal colonnade there on the top of the Pinnacle of the Temple.
5. So the devil takes Jesus there and shows Him the sights
 - a. as Jesus looked down, he would see the vast multitudes walking

by

- b. then the devil quoted scripture to Him.
- c. from Psalm 91 he quoted, "It is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'"
- 6. The appeal was this: If Jesus jumped, and just before He landed in the Valley below a couple of angels swoop-ed down and caught Him and lowed him safely to earth, the crowds would have gone ape
 - a. they would see him descending from the Pinnacle of the temple
 - b. they would see him perform this dramatic miracle
 - c. and they would have flocked to His banner as the Messiah
 - d. even the religious leaders; Pharisees and Sadducees
- 7. What made this temptation especially difficult was that the devil brought the bible to bear
 - a. he quoted scripture to support his case
 - b. but Jesus didn't go for it
 - c. He knew the devil was twisting scripture

12 And Jesus answered and said to him, "It has been said, 'You shall not tempt the LORD your God.'"

- 8. Jesus didn't get into a debate with the devil
 - a. He didn't argue with him
 - b. because He knew the devil is false and full of deceit
 - c. rather, He simply quoted another passage
 - d. He balanced scripture with scripture
- 9. You know, you can make the bible mean just about anything if you take verses out of context and don't compare scripture with scripture
 - a. this is what the cults do
 - b. they twist a verse here
 - c. misquote a passage there
- 10. The devil is a master at twisting scripture
- 11. But because Jesus knew the whole counsel of God, He answered the devil's lies with truth

12. When a child of God is in the will of God, he can claim the Father's protection and care

13. But if he willfully gets into trouble and expects God to rescue him, then he is tempting God.

14. We tempt God when we force Him to act contrary to His word.

15. In this temptation, satan tempted Jesus with the pride of life

- a. if he would just jump off the pinnacle into the crowd,
- b. they would all love him and worship Him
- 16. Every single one of us knows what it means to want to be loved and accepted by others
 - a. we long for respect and admiration of others
 - b. Jesus knew that He would be despised and rejected
 - c. and that rejection would lead to His death
 - d. the temptation to win the crowds approval was strong indeed
 - e. but Jesus knew the honor of the world is fleeting
 - f. he knew the only honor that matters is the honor God gives to those who faithfully follow Him

17. So it is for us
 - a. the world holds before us the things we have to do if we are to earn its acceptance and honor
 - b. no where is this more true and evident than in Jr. and Sr. high school
 - c. but the things we learn there about acceptance and honor stick with us the rest of our lives and we carry them into the workplace and our homes
 - d. now, we can try to live by the world's every changing standards of success and acceptance
 - e. or we can rather live before God in His unchanging way of grace
 - f. let's follow Jesus' example and shun the world that we might know the peace of God, even though it means bearing the world's scorn and wrath

E. "It Is Written"

1. Did you notice that Jesus responded to each of the devil's temptations with the word of God
2. Rather than arguing or debating the value of each of satan's offers, Jesus merely held forth scripture and its call to be obedient to God
3. His victory over temptation came from God's word
4. Jesus not only KNEW the word of God, He applied it
5. He followed the words of David said in Psalm 119, "Your word have I hidden in my heart that I might not sin against you."
6. If there is nothing else we learn from this passage let us at least learn this
7. It is the living word of God that provides us what we need to overcome and live a victorious life
8. I am gravely concerned for the Christians today as I see how the Bible is being re-defined along psychological lines
9. Instead of scripture being the basis for living, Christians are being told they need to adopt the latest theories of psychology
10. Then, like the devil who twisted scripture in tempting Jesus, those who advocate a psychological approach to life misquote and twist scripture to support their beliefs.
11. Have been listening to a lot lately
 - a. more and more have heard,
 - b. "As the Bible says . . ."
 - c. then they say something that isn't even hinted at in scripture
 - d. too many uninformed Christians who buy it
12. If God intended us to grow and overcome temptation by the means of modern psychology, then why don't we see it clearly defined in the NT?
13. No friends; if the Word of God was sufficient for Jesus, it's sufficient for us.
14. Any other way is the way of ruin.

F. V. 13

13. Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until a more opportune time.
1. Many people think that Jesus wasn't really tempted

2. After all, He was God so the temptations we read about here were but a formality - something he had to pass thru but didn't really phase Him
3. Nothing could be further from the truth
4. He see, in these temptations, Jesus faced the full gamut of temptation - no one has been so sorely tempted as Jesus
5. We read here in v. 13 that the devil ended EVERY temptation
 - a. all the temptations mankind has experience were concentrated in these three
 - b. Jesus was tempted with things that you and I fortunately will never have to face
 - c. also, remember that this was the devil himself who tempted Jesus
 - d. at most all we will every face is some minor demon
6. And since Jesus resisted, He face the full weight of temptation
7. Let me ask you a question; who knows better what temptation is really all about, who knows better the pressure of temptation -
 - a. the righteous man who resists temptation?
 - b. or the one who gives in quickly?
8. C.S. Lewis once wrote, "A silly idea is current that good people do not know what temptation means. This is an obvious lie. Only those who try to resist temptation know how strong it is . . . A man who gives in to temptation after five minutes simply does not know what it would have been like an hour later. That is why bad people, in one sense, know very little about badness. They have lived a sheltered life by always giving in. We never find out the strength of the evil impulse inside us until we try to fight it: and Christ, because He was the only man who never yielded to temptation, is also the only man who knows to the full what temptation means - the only complete realist."

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Overcoming
 1. Jesus overcame the devil and temptation as a man
 2. He did so by trusting in God and His word
 3. This is how you and I can overcome temptation as well