

FBC POWELL, 3-12-17 PM NOTES  
"The Temptation of Jesus"  
Luke 4:1-13  
# 9 in Series, "The Gospel According to Luke"

**Luke 4:1-2a (ESV)** "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."

**Mark 1:12** "Immediately the Spirit **impelled Him** to go out into the wilderness."

Apollinarianism – The view named after Apollinaris who was a bishop in Laodicea in about 361 AD. He taught that the physical body of Christ was human, but the mind and spirit of Christ were from the divine nature.

Nestorianism – The view named after Nestorius who was the bishop of Constantinople from 428 AD. This view said that Christ was two distinct persons in one body.

Monophysitism – The view made popular by Eutyches (378-454 AD) who taught that the human nature of Christ was taken up and absorbed into the divine nature so that both natures were changed somewhat and a third kind of nature resulted.

The Council at Chalcedon, in 451 AD, determined that all three of the major views above were heresy. They came up with what was called "The Chalcedonian Definition." "It taught that Christ definitely has two natures, a human nature and a divine nature. It taught that His divine nature is exactly the same as that of the Father...And it maintained that the human nature is exactly like our human nature, yet without sin...Moreover, it affirmed that in the person of Christ the human nature retains its distinctive characteristics and the divine nature retains its distinctive characteristics...Finally, it affirmed that, whether we can understand it or not, these two natures are united together in the one person of Christ." — Wayne Grudem

The union of Christ's two natures is often called, "The Hypostatic Union."

"Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man; He is not half God and half man. He is as much God as if He was not man at all, and He is as much man as if He was not God at all. He is the God man." — Adrian Rogers

**Hebrews 2:17-18** "Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted."

**Hebrews 4:15-16** "For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

I. The Timing (vv. 1-2)

**Mark 13:48a** "Keep watching and praying that you may not come into temptation."

## II. The Temptation (vv. 3-12)

### A. Jesus Was Tempted Concerning God's Provision (vv. 3-4)

**Luke 3:22b** "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."

**Genesis 3:1b** "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'"

**John 6:38** "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."

**Psalms 119:11** "Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You."

"When our Lord quoted Deuteronomy 8:3, He put the emphasis on the word *man*. As the eternal Son of God, He had *power* to do anything; but as the humble Son of Man, He had *authority* to do only that which the Father willed... Because He was man, He hungered; but He trusted the Father to meet His needs in His own time and in His own way."  
— Warren Weirsbe

**Matthew 6:33** "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

### B. Jesus Was Tempted Concerning God's Plan (vv. 5-8)

**Psalms 2:7-8** "I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession.'"

### C. Jesus Was Tempted Concerning God's Protection (vv. 9-12)

"The faith which is dependent on signs and wonders is not faith at all; it is doubt looking for proof." — Unknown

**Daniel 3:17-18** "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But **even if He does not**, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."

**Deuteronomy 6:16a** "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."

## III. The Triumph (v. 13)

"Let us be as watchful after the victory as before the battle."

— Andrew Bonar

**Romans 8:37** "But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."

**First Baptist Church Powell 03 12 17 PM**  
**Chapter 9: The Temptation of Jesus**  
**Luke 4:1-13**

In this message we enter a whole new section of the Gospel of Luke. Beginning in Luke 4:14 is the public ministry and teaching of Jesus. But before Jesus' public ministry, there is something that the Father has ordained that He go through. I am speaking of the temptation in the wilderness.

Something that we all have in common is temptation. Ever since the events recorded in Genesis 3 when the tempter came to Eve in the garden, temptation has been a way of life. Throughout the history of the church, men have sought for ways to walk in victory over temptation. Benedict of Nursia (480-543) sought victory over temptation by wearing an extremely uncomfortable hair shirt and living in a desolate cave where his meager supply of food was lowered to him on a rope. Benedict, however found no victory over temptation through his asceticism; he found that temptation made its way even down deep into a cave.

Jovinian was a heretical monk who lived in the fifth century. He taught the ridiculous doctrine that after a person was baptized, he was free from the Devil's temptation. The early church Father Jerome confronted this false doctrine. He said that baptism doesn't drown the Devil. Temptation is a way of life for every believer. In understanding the temptation of Christ, we will learn some very valuable principles about how we can walk in victory over the temptation that inevitably comes to us.

Before we begin to look closely at these verses, we need to answer a question. Why was Jesus tempted? Look at Luke 4:1-2a (ESV): "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." In Mark's account of the temptation, we read in Mark 1:12: "Immediately the Spirit impelled Him to go out into the wilderness." It was God who engineered this whole temptation scenario. Before we deal with the "why" of the temptation in the wilderness, we need to answer a really basic question. Could Jesus have sinned? The plain answer to the question is an emphatic "No"! He could not have sinned because even though He was fully man, He was also fully God, and God is holy and cannot sin.

In the scope of this message, we are not going to delve deep into the nature of Christ and the union of deity and humanity. It can give you brain cramps! I do want us to spend some time on it because it is very important. In the early church, there was constant controversy about how the human and the divine came together in union in Christ. Let's look at some of the views in the early church and see why most were rejected by church councils and why one was accepted that is still accepted in orthodox Christianity.

First let's examine Apollinarianism. This view is named after Apollinaris who was a bishop in Laodicea in about 361 AD. He taught that the physical body of Christ was human, but the mind and spirit of Christ were from the divine nature. The early church leaders correctly rejected that view as heresy.

Next, there was Nestorianism, named after Nestorius, who was from 428 AD the bishop of Constantinople. This view said that Christ was two distinct persons in one body. This heretical view was also rejected by the early church. Nowhere in Scripture do we find that the human nature of Christ is independent of the divine nature whereby they function as two persons.

Another heretical view was Monophysitism. This view was made somewhat popular by a leader in the early church named Eutyches (378-454 AD). He taught that the human nature of Christ was taken up and absorbed into the divine nature so that both natures were changed somewhat and a third kind of nature resulted. Monophysitism was also determined to be heresy in the early church.

The solution to all of this controversy came in the Council at Chalcedon in 451 AD. Out of that council came a statement that all three of the major views we just looked at were heresy. They came up with what was called "The Chalcedonian Definition." It is, still today, viewed as the orthodox Christian

view. I could read you the statement the church leaders came up with, but it is pretty deep so I will allow theologian Wayne Grudem to summarize it.

It taught that Christ definitely has two natures, a human nature and a divine nature. It taught that His divine nature is exactly the same as that of the Father... And it maintained that the human nature is exactly like our human nature, yet without sin...Moreover, it affirmed that in the person of Christ the human nature retains its distinctive characteristics and the divine nature retains its distinctive characteristics...Finally, it affirmed that, whether we can understand it or not, these two natures are united together in the one person of Christ.  
[John Grudem, Systematic Theology, page 557, 558]

The union of Christ's two natures is often called, "The Hypostatic Union" (from the Greek word for "being"). Adrian Rogers used to put it this way: "Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man; He is not half God and half man. He is as much God as if He was not man at all, and He is as much man as if He was not God at all. He is the God man." That's a pretty accurate summary of The Hypostatic Union.

Because He was (and is) fully God, He cannot sin; because He was (and is) fully man, the temptation was real. Why was this temptation engineered by God? There are several reasons. It was not to see whether or not He would sin; it was to prove that He was sinless. His victory did not make Him sinless; it revealed and affirmed His sinlessness. He was tempted so that it might be revealed to every being on earth and in heaven that Jesus the Savior is also the conqueror! While Satan intended to lead the Savior into sin, God used it to prove His sinlessness.

Another reason Jesus was tempted in this wilderness experience is that it equipped Him to be our High Priest. Hebrews 2:17-18: "Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted." Hebrews 4:15-16: "For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore, let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." In the wilderness, Jesus suffered every type of temptation possible and thus He experientially understands temptation.

A third reason for His temptation was to expose Satan's methods and to demonstrate to us how we come against the enemy with the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. We need to understand that just as the Father allowed Jesus to be tempted, He allows us to be tempted. Satan's tempting becomes God's testing. God's testing is not meant to weaken us that we might fall; it is meant to strengthen us that we might stand. Temptation is allowed by God to strengthen our spiritual muscles. No one should feel guilt for being tempted. Temptation is allowed by God and was experienced by Jesus.

## **I. The Timing (vv. 1-2)**

The temptation in the wilderness took place just after Jesus' baptism. I have seen it in the Scripture and I have experienced it in my life, that after a great victory or a great mountain top experience we are usually inundated with temptation and spiritual attacks from the realm of darkness. You can write it down; it will happen. So just after the high and holy experience of His baptism in the Jordan River, where the Spirit came down and the Father audibly spoke, Jesus is led to the place of temptation. We see this so often in Scripture. Immediately after Elijah's great victory over the prophets of Baal, he is tempted and succumbs to the temptation of fear regarding the queen of Israel, Jezebel. He single-handedly killed 450 prophets of Baal and then ran from one woman, sat under a Juniper tree, and prayed for God to take his life. After a great spiritual high comes the onslaught of the tempter.

Let's look at the place where most think the temptation took place. The wilderness of Judea is a hot desolate area about thirty-five miles long and fifteen miles wide. Israeli soldiers do survival training there. There is an interesting contrast here. In the New Testament, Jesus is called "The second Adam."

The first Adam was tempted in a beautiful garden where he could eat from any trees of the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17). The first Adam fell. The second Adam, Jesus Christ was tempted in a desolate wilderness after fasting forty days and forty nights and stood firm against every enticement to sin that the devil threw at Him. What the first Adam lost in an ideal environment, the Second Adam won back in a horrible environment.

## **II. The Temptation (vv. 3-12)**

Before we look at each of the three parts of this temptation, I want us to examine how Satan went about presenting the temptation. Was it within Jesus' mind (which wouldn't make it any less real) or was it an actual appearance of the devil? Parts of the temptation seem to be a literal visible appearance of Satan, and parts of it seem to be more visionary. For instance, the first temptation in verse 3 seems to require Satan's literal presence. He says, "...command that these stones become bread..." That gives the impression that he is pointing at them. The second temptation seems more visionary since there is no literal mountain where all the kingdoms of the world can be seen. As we apply that to our temptations, sometimes the tempter works through people or physical circumstances and sometimes the temptation is in our thought life. Both are equally real and equally dangerous.

As we examine these three temptations, remember that the way He tempted Jesus is in principle the way Satan tempts us (though not exactly the same temptations), and the way we come away victorious is the way Jesus came away victorious.

### **A. Jesus Was Tempted Concerning God's Provision (vv. 3-4)**

Satan is amazingly predictable in the pattern of his temptation. Remember that just a short time earlier the Father said in Luke 3:22b: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased." Now Satan is casting doubt on what God has said. That is exactly the tactic he used with Eve. In Genesis 3:1b: "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'" The temptation by Satan seems to say, "Maybe you really aren't the Son of God. Why don't you settle it here and now by a genuine miracle and turn these stones into bread for you to eat." This temptation was to act independently of the Father's will and to exercise the attributes of deity for selfish purposes. When Satan tempted Eve, he said that she would be as God (Genesis 3:5). The essence of sin is to live and act independently of God and in so doing we are serving as our own god. Oh how we need to broaden our concept of sin. It is not just doing those things that God's word says is wrong (though it includes that); it is simply living your life independently of Him serving as your own god and making your own decisions apart from any concern about God's will. So in this first temptation, Satan questions the Word of God, he questions the goodness of God (as Son of God why doesn't your Father feed you), and he tries to lead Jesus to abandon the will of God to meet His own needs in an uncomfortable circumstance. Whereas Eve bought Satan's lies, Jesus did not. Look at His response to the tempter in Luke 4:4b: "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone.'"

In two of the three temptations (in all three in Matthew's account), Jesus began His response to Satan with the phrase, "It is written." Jesus faced temptation as a man using the same resources we have available to us. As a boy, and as an adult, He could say with the Psalmist, in Psalm 119:11 "Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You." The word used here for "word" doesn't mean the Word of God as a whole but specific promises and principles of the word. It is also interesting that Jesus' answer is from the book of Deuteronomy which is not one of the most popular books to memorize from today. Jesus in His answer was saying that the will of God is more important than physical needs.

Before we go to the second temptation, let me drive a point home. Apart from having God's word hidden in our heart we are sitting ducks for temptation. If the very Son of God used the word of God how dare we think we could overcome in the power of our own flesh!

### **B. Jesus Was Tempted Concerning God's Plan (vv. 5-8)**

It was the Father's plan for the Son to receive the Kingdom and rule and reign forever. Psalm 2 is a promise from the Father to the Son. Psalm 2:7-8: "I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to

Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession.'" This offer from Satan was a serious temptation because it was the offer to take a short cut to the promised Kingdom. In short, it was a temptation to have the crown without the cross. Jesus knew that the cross loomed ahead and He knew the agony of experiencing separation from the Father when He would take the sins of those who would believe. To bow down to Satan – just this once – would bring Him His kingdom and by-pass the cross. Let's apply this temptation to us. It is basically the temptation to allow pragmatism to rule our lives. Pragmatism says whatever brings about the desired end is acceptable. In other words, "The end justifies the means." "After all, all that matters is that the King has His kingdom. So what if He had to worship Satan. The end justifies the means." Jesus said, "NO! Obedience to the Father is what matters. He has forbidden us to worship anyone but Him." (The first of the Ten Commandments)

We get all sorts of varieties of this temptation – "Cut this ethical corner and you will get a position of influence that you can use to witness for the Lord." "With the money I get from this unethical deal I can support missions." Jesus saw through Satan's promises and again answered him with the written Word from Deuteronomy 6:13 and 10:20.

### **C. Jesus Was Tempted Concerning God's Protection (vv. 9-12)**

Having failed to get the Son of God to abandon God's will to fulfill His physical needs, and to take the pragmatic path to escape the cross, now He tempts Him to put the Father's love and power to a test. The pinnacle of the temple was probably the southeast corner which stood about 450 feet above the Kidron valley floor. It is as if Satan says, "Oh, You want to quote Scripture do you? I can quote some too." Satan then quoted from Psalm 91:11-12. This was a real temptation. This miraculous act would cause many to accept Him as the Messiah and King. Because the Father had not told Jesus to do this miracle, Jesus said in verse 12 that to jump would be "tempting the Lord" (NKJV). We tempt God when we (apart from His specific direction) put ourselves in circumstances that try to force Him to work miracles on our behalf. The temptation to advance the word of God by spectacular and worldly means has always been around. Don't misunderstand me; I believe that God can and does work miracles. However, I believe that God is sovereign in His ways and we don't dictate to Him when He does a miracle. To try to dictate to God that He should do a sign or wonder is to tempt God. This is the problem I have with some in the "signs and wonders" movement. They seem to dictate to God how He should respond. Dictating to God what He must do is what Satan was tempting Jesus to do. I remember a quote that I read, or heard, that blessed me, but I can't remember where I heard or read it. "The faith which is dependent on signs and wonders is not faith at all; it is doubt looking for proof."

In Jesus' answers to these temptations we learn two principles of Bible interpretation. The first principle is that we are to trust the word of God completely. Every word of it proceeds out of His mouth (inspiration means "God breathed"). The second principle is that Scripture must be interpreted by Scripture. The God who breathes out His word does not contradict Himself. We must take each passage in the context of the Scripture as a whole. Satan used a tactic that all false teachers use; he took Scripture out of context. Jesus rightly interpreted Psalm 91:11-12 in light of Deuteronomy 6:16a "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."

### **III. The Triumph (vv. 13)**

Satan is persistent. Andrew Bonar said, "Let us be as watchful after the victory as before the battle." [Warren Weirsbe, page 184]

Here is the truth that I want to leave you with. We have access to all that Jesus used to overcome these temptations. We have the Holy Spirit of God to fill us (v. 1), and we have the Word of God to guide us. Romans 8:37: "But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."