

The Temptation Of Jesus

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[0 : 00] And so today, in his absence, I have the privilege of diving into the Gospel of Luke where he left off last week.

! And we're going to be looking at the first 13 verses of chapter 4, the temptation of Jesus. And this, I look at this short little passage, and I think of, you know, you hear a lot of people say that reading the Bible can be boring, you know.

But I look at this story, and just to think about what some of these things looked like, you know, and to think about the conversation that went on between Jesus and the devil.

But it's one of those passages that it's packed so full of practical application, because the same things, the same ways that the devil tempted Jesus, he's going to use those same tactics and those same methods to try to get at us as well.

[1 : 12] There's one thing I want to talk about before we actually even get into the passage, and it's the first fill-in on your notes. And it might sound a little strange, but here it is.

I think. I have to hit the right button.

Sorry, guys. I don't know. Here it is. The exchange between Jesus and the devil was not a fair fight. And what I mean by that is this. This was not a showdown of some sort between equal and opposite forces, good versus evil.

Even though the devil is very powerful and scripture tells us that God has granted him power over this world for a time. We have to remember that God has always been and always will be in control.

[2 : 32] Think about it this way for a minute. John's gospel starts out talking about how Jesus became the word made flesh. Verses 1 and 2 of the gospel of John.

In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. He was in the beginning with God. What's the word?

Who's the word? Jesus. Go on to the next verse. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.

So God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, has existed and will exist for all eternity. The devil, on the other hand, is a created being.

Created by God as an angel who was eventually cast out of heaven because he wasn't satisfied to serve God. He wanted to be like God.

[3 : 36] He wanted to be God. And ever since that happened, he's been doing his best to discredit God and to drive a wedge between God's people and him.

So this showdown wasn't a meeting of the creator of everything good versus the creator of everything evil. The devil is a created being that went bad.

If we skip a few verses in John's gospel, skip down to verse 14, he says this, And the word became flesh and dwelt among us.

And we have seen his glory. Glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. And this is something that we have to get right.

And it's the third point on your notes. Jesus was both fully God and fully human.

[5 : 09] This is one of the foundations of our faith. We have to get this right for this story, not just for this story to make sense, but to get everything about our faith makes sense.

He's both fully God and fully human. There's another thing I'd like to mention about this passage, and I'll try to do it quickly here.

This is a familiar story. It appears in two of the other gospels. And if you held Matthew's gospel up against Luke's gospel, you're going to see what on the surface looks like discrepancies.

The first temptation in both of them is the same, but between Luke's and Matthew's, they're flip-flopped, to which someone who doesn't want to believe in the Bible, someone who wants to

discredit the Bible, or to say that scripture is inerrant, would say, oh, no, no, we've got to throw it out.

I mean, you've got two eyewitnesses here that are saying different things, which I would beg to differ. There's a man named James Warner Wallace.

[6 : 45] He's a retired Los Angeles County homicide detective, and he recently wrote a book called Cold Case Christianity. And drawing on his years of experience interviewing suspects, he makes the point that you should expect discrepancies between eyewitness accounts.

Because reliable eyewitness accounts, he says, always differ slightly in the way that they recall the story. They may be coming at it from different geographic perspectives or different historical perspectives, and that's the case here.

Matthew's account gives the three temptations in their historical or in their chronological order, while Luke is giving the highlights in their geographical order.

He moves from the desert to the mountain to the temple area in Jerusalem. And, by the way, the man that wrote this book, Cold Case Christianity, was not a believer who was trying to prove that Christianity could be true.

He was a devout atheist when he started this study who became a Christian after analyzing all of the evidence in the Gospels.

[8 : 16] And he says he's a Christian now because it's evidentially true. So, got a few things, preliminaries out of the way, so let's get to the passage.

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness. So, remember where we left off last week?

We were at, last week we were at Jesus' baptism in the Jordan by John. where God had said, you are my beloved son, and you I'm well pleased.

And it's the place where God basically introduced him to the world as Israel's Messiah. And you think about that, that had to be quite a mountaintop experience, right?

And he goes directly from the mountaintop to the valley for 40 days being tempted by the devil.

[9 : 31] And we're not really sure if there were other temptations going on during this 40 days, if it was a continual back and forth.

The way that it's worded, it almost leads you to believe that it was, being tempted by the devil for 40 days. But the only specific ones that we hear about are these three that come after 40 days.

Moving on. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry. And here we have the mother of all understatements, right here in Scripture.

So, has anybody else in here ever been accused of being hangry? Hangry?

Has anybody else ever been told, you really need to eat something? Me too.

[10 : 47] And this mind cannot wrap itself around 40 days with no food, right? But, it's Jesus.

the devil said to him, if you are the son of God, if you are the son of God, command this stone to become bread.

And the devil shows up to do what the devil does, right? The devil comes to introduce doubt. And he comes to hit you at your weakest point, right?

Now, we know that just, what, 40 days before this, God had said, you are my son. I'm well pleased with you.

And now, we have the devil. If if you really are the son of God, you know, why don't you, why don't you turn these stones to bread?

[12 : 02] You know, looks like, I don't know, looks like your dad's not taking care of you here. Just, just do it. But, Jesus has none of it.

And Jesus answered him, it is written, man shall not live by bread alone. And, he's, he's actually quoting from the Old Testament, book of Deuteronomy, what, what Moses had told the Israelites. Deuteronomy 8, 3. 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.

So, right off the bat, all, all Jesus has to do is just go to the word. Strike one for the devil. Moving on. Then it says, and the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. What in the world did that look like?

[13 : 31] You know what I mean? How did that happen? You know, it's obviously had to be some sort of supernatural thing. I mean, even if you're on top of a mountain, you know, the earth is round.

You're not going to see everything, but somehow the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

And then he said to them, to you, I will give all this authority and their glory for it has been delivered to me and I will give it to whom I will.

remember, up front, we had said that the devil has been given power over this world for a time and actually 2 Corinthians, Paul talks about, actually refers to the devil as the god of this world, little g, god of this world.

The devil goes on, I think. If you then will worship me, it will be all yours.

[14:58] Jesus, Jesus knew his father's will. He knew that one day he will rule over everything and he will reign over the whole world and he wasn't going to fall for the shortcut that the devil was offering here.

It's like the devil is saying, look, I can give you a really good deal on this and it's not going to cost you nearly as much as the other way is going to cost you.

Right? All you got to do is just bend a knee and it's yours. And the devil, you know, he kind of does the same thing with us at times, doesn't he?

He tries to get us to take the easy way out to get to where we're going. You know, tries to convince us that, you know, the Lord's way, you know, it's just too hard that way.

But Jesus knew that if he'd have taken the easy way out, it would have completely thwarted God's plan for salvation for all of us.

[16:14] So he counters again from Scripture. And Jesus answered him, it is written, you shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.

strike two. So we come to the third temptation. And he took him, the devil took Jesus 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.

So pause. So we have to take a minute to say, really?

Is the devil really going to go there? He's going to try to outwit Jesus at his own game. He's got the word sitting right there in front of him and he's going to try to use the word to trip up the word.

it's the created thing trying to outwit the creator that made him in the first place.

[17:41] Hard to believe that he would try that, but he's going to give it a shot. 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.

So the devil quotes Psalm 91 verses 11 and 12 to try to get Jesus to take the easy way out again. And, I mean, think about it.

If, you know, the devil's trying to make the point that, okay, this is what your word says, you know, jump off the temple, if the angels keep you safe, God protects you, all your people are going to see that you really are who you said you are.

And, you can have it now. People will know that you're the Messiah. Messiah. So again, he's trying to get Jesus to take the easy way out and, you know, to keep him from going to the cross, which, thankfully for us, he doesn't bite.

And Jesus answered him, it is said, you shall not put the Lord your God to the test. strike three. And we see, so we see that every time that the devil comes at Jesus, every time he throws a temptation at him, Jesus does this, the next point on your notes.

[19:35] Tom! There it is. Every time that Jesus faced a temptation, he went straight to the word of God.

And that is obviously what we have to do as well. the only way that we can resist temptation, the only way that we can stand up against the devil is to realize that we can't do it in our own strength. And if you flip your notes over, there's three things we're going to take kind of a quick look at, some things that we can do, some things that we can keep in mind. some of the commentators on this passage, they say that it would be impossible for Jesus to give in to the devil's temptations because he was fully God.

But, I mean, he was also fully human. but we are not, right? We have to know our limitations.

We have to know that even though we've trusted Christ to save us, even though we've been bought and paid for, even though we've been rescued from the punishment that we deserve, we still have a sin nature.

[21 : 13] We still will struggle with sin. And, the great apostle Paul talks about that in Romans chapter seven. You know, he basically says, I know the good that I should do and I end up not doing it.

I know the evil I, you know, well, opposite of that. I know the good I should do, I don't do it. I know the evil I shouldn't do, I do it.

What is the matter of me? What's the matter with me? Who can rescue me from this body of death? I mean, even the apostle Paul, I mean, it's very clear that he struggled with sin as well.

This is the next point on your notes. We still have a sin nature. and going right along with that.

We will all struggle with sin in some way, shape, or form until the day we die. And I don't think there's a one of us that wants to admit just how bad we're really capable of being.

[23 : 00] I don't know. The older that I get for some reason, and this probably sounds like a terrible thing for a pastor to say standing up here in front of you.

The older I get, the more I realize the depth of the evil that I'm capable of. and real quick, I'll try to do this.

Reminds me of some other older guys in another story about Jesus that the apostle John told. the story about the woman called adultery. Remember? The Pharisees, they were going to set Jesus up, right? Okay?

They had this woman caught in adultery. Don't have the guy, but we've got the woman. So, they were going to trap him, right? So, Jesus is with a crowd, talking to this crowd, and the Pharisees bring in this woman caught in adultery.

[24 : 16] And so, they know that, well, and they tell him, they tell Jesus, okay, our law says that this woman should be stoned to death.

So, what do you say about that? Because they knew that if he said no, shouldn't stone her, all of these people that he's talking to, it will discredit him to these people.

But, it will, if he says no, don't stone her, he will be going against the law of Moses. So, it's a no-win situation.

It's a setup, basically. And, I would have, this is one of the things I would have just loved to be able to see, is, you know, they're coming at him, okay, what do you say?

Should we stone her? And, he just writes in the sand and doesn't say a word and they keep coming at him and keep coming at him and finally he says, okay, stone her, but, that he was without sin, cast the first stone, right?

[25 : 38] Then, what is the next thing it says? they all, one by one, dropped their stones and walked away. What's the final thing it says?

The oldest ones first. I think that the older we get, the more we realize just how bad.

we really can be compared to how good our Savior is. Whew!

Sorry about that. Nothing worse than a crying preacher. Oh. Oh. Okay.

Another thing that we need to know, we need to be aware of so that we can counter these temptations is we have to know how our enemy operates, right?

[26 : 51] So this is another passage from John. Actually, same chapter that that story we just talked about was in, just further in the chapter, where Jesus is going at it with the Pharisees again, okay?

And he's getting mean with Pharisees here. And he's, well, I'll let it speak for itself. This is Jesus talking to the Pharisees.

You are of your father, the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth.

Because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks of his own character. For he is a liar and the father of lies.

And I would add, not just the father of lies, but he's also a master of half-truths.

[27 : 57] Right? He's a master at taking something that there's a little shred of truth in it and twist it just a little bit to make something that's good sound bad or to make something that's bad sound good.

And we are surrounded by this almost everywhere that we look. turn on and you turn on the news and you see just outright lies.

I will probably get in trouble for this one, but I have to mention this one. This is just a whopper that I saw the other day.

Rich pointed this out to me. We were talking one day last week and he pointed this out and I had to go later and try to find it on YouTube and see it.

And it's like, wow. Anyways, our vice president just gave a speech in Munich, Germany at what was it?

[29 : 19] The Munich Security Convention or Conference or something like that. And this conference, it's our allies, other democratic countries coming together to discuss ways to secure outside threats to our countries.

And our vice president talked about the fact that he was more concerned with threats from within our own countries than threats from without.

And he was talking specifically about the attack, I guess you could say, on free speech. And he pointed out several instances that were like, wait, what?

So one of them, I think it was in Britain, there's a man that was arrested because he was praying outside of an abortion clinic.

So these abortion clinics, they have a 200-meter safe zone, okay, that you cannot be in there, you cannot do anything to disrupt them, whatever. Well, he was 50 meters away from the abortion clinic.

[30 : 49] He wasn't praying out loud, he wasn't blocking anyone's entrance or exit from the building, he wasn't protesting, he wasn't preaching, he was just standing on the side saying nothing.

And the police came up to him and said, what are you doing here? and he said, I'm praying for my son that my girlfriend and I aborted in that building.

And they said, come with us, you're going to jail. And that's no lie. Another instance, you know, this 200-meter safety zone, 200 meters is a long way, right?

If you're in a town, there's going to be houses, there's going to be other buildings within 200 meters, obviously. There have been people told that if they pray silently in their house because they're within 200 meters of this abortion clinic, you will be breaking the law.

So you can't pray silently in your house. I mean, you know, it's not just that we have retreated from freedom of speech, but I mean, it's all out thought crimes now that people are being punished for.

[32 : 23] So, Mr. Vance pointed out a few of those things, and then, I don't know how long after that happened, but there was an exchange between a CBS reporter, and Marco Rubio, who's our, what, Secretary of State?

Okay. And obviously, this CBS reporter, I don't know if it might have been Face the Nation or one of those programs or something, but the reporter's asking Rubio what he thought of Vice President Vance's speech.

And she's obviously very upset with it, and Rubio was like, well, you know, he spoke the truth, he spoke his mind, that's the basis of democracy.

If, you know, we're supposedly meeting with these other democracies, and just the fact that we're meeting means that we should be able to speak our mind and give different opinions, even if we don't agree with those opinions.

And the reporter said, yes, but he was speaking in a country where freedom of speech was weaponized to commit a genocide.

[33 : 57] What? Freedom of speech, she said freedom of speech was weaponized to make the Holocaust possible.

And it just rolled off her tongue like it was the truth, you know, and she just kept right on going. And Rubio, he let her speak a little bit, and then he started interrupting, he said, no, I disagree with you, no, no, I disagree with you.

And it took three or four I disagree with you's before he could finally speak. And he said, the Holocaust did not happen because freedom of speech was weaponized.

The Holocaust was performed by an authoritative Nazi regime. There was no such thing as freedom of speech in Nazi Germany.

You had one political party that was all powerful and any other opinion was immediately silenced. that is a misrepresentation of history.

[35 : 13] And she just kept talking. And you think about, okay, you've got the news media pulling for on the side of the removal of freedom of speech.

What, you know, the truth is stranger than fiction a lot of the times, isn't it? I mean, and this is CBS. I think that old Walter Cronkite would have rolled over in his grave, you know.

And that's the way it is. Not so much anymore, Walter. Not so much anymore. Do you know why he keeps doing that?

There we go. Satan is the father of lies. I purposely waited to show this next verse.

It's the last verse from today's passage in Luke. Until we got to this next fill in the blank. And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

[37 : 11] Okay. Luke doesn't say, and when the devil had ended every temptation, he went away. Because he didn't just go away.

He never just goes away, does he? He departed from him until an opportune time. Because evil never sleeps.

from the day the devil convinced Adam and Eve to take a bite of an apple in the garden until right now, he's been doing everything in his power to keep us from knowing and serving and loving God the way we were designed to.

to. And he will keep doing it until he's thrown into the lake of fire that the book of Revelation talks about. He's been doing it for a long, long time and he is very good at it.

And we are absolutely no match for him. But thankfully our Savior is.

[38 : 29] And that's why we have to really, really know our Savior. I just absolutely love this verse from Hebrews.

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

It's been argued that only someone who fully resists temptation can know the extent of its force, or in other words, how strong it can really be.

And even though Jesus is fully God, he was also fully human. so he felt the extent of the force of those temptations.

And it stands to reason that only he, only the sinless one, only Jesus has a greater compassion, a greater capacity for compassion than any sinner would have for a fellow sinner.

[39 : 50] That's our last point on your notes. grace. Maybe we finally figured it out at the end, huh?

No one could ever have more compassion for us than Jesus. And he proved it at the cross. next verse in Hebrews.

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time need.

to that. Amen