

“The Temptation of Christ”

Luke 4:1-13

Pastor John Miller

I. Introduction

- A. An exasperated motorist parked his car in a no-parking zone in London and attached the following message to the windshield: “I have circled this block twenty times. I have an appointment to keep, forgive us our trespasses.” When the owner of the car returned, he found this reply attached to his own note: “I’ve circled this block for twenty years. If I don’t give you a ticket, I lose my job. Lead us not into temptation.”
- B. We come today to the temptation of Christ
 - 1. It’s recorded by all three of the synoptic gospels
 - 2. It’s also autobiographical, and only Jesus could tell the story
 - 3. Jesus is now ready to embark on His public ministry, a ministry designed to destroy the works of the devil, so it’s no surprise that He would encounter the devil himself
- C. The setting of the temptation (vv. 1-2)
 - 1. The time of His temptation is right after His baptism (v. 1)
 - 2. It came immediately after a great blessing
 - 3. “After the dove, the devil, after the reassuring voice of the Father, the insinuating hiss of the Serpent, after the comforting words ‘thou art my beloved son,’ the sinister challenge ‘if thou be the Son of God.’” – J. Oswald Sanders
- D. The contrast “the first Adam” and “Jesus the last Adam”
 - 1. The genealogy of Jesus (3:38)
 - 2. From Jesus back to Adam
 - 3. A universal gospel
- E. Jesus full of the Holy Spirit and led by the Spirit (v. 1)
- F. Why would the Spirit lead Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted?
 - 1. The nature of the temptation (v. 1)
 - a) From the devil (temptation to do evil)
 - b) Allowed by God (to test or to prove)
 - c) Old Testament- Abraham (Genesis 22)
 - d) New Testament (James 1)
 - 2. To show us that Jesus could not sin
 - a) The impeccability of Christ
 - b) The temptation was real (His humanity)
 - c) It’s not a sin to be tempted
 - 3. To qualify Him as our Sympathetic High Priest
 - 4. To expose Satan’s tactics
 - a) (1 Peter 5:8)
 - b) Lust of the flesh
 - c) Lust of the eyes
 - d) Pride of life
 - 1) Illustration- Eve in the garden
 - 5. To give us a pattern for our own victory
 - a) (1 Corinthians 10:13)

- G. Let's look at the three temptations Jesus faced and discover how we can detect and defeat the Devil

II. The First Temptation (Luke 4:3-4)

- A. What is the temptation?
1. The temptation was in the sphere of bodily appetite
 - a) Lust of the flesh
 - b) Your passions
 - c) Illustration- Satan and Eve "lust of the flesh"
 2. Jesus was hungry. What is wrong with eating food?
 - a) Nothing
 - b) The sin would be like in His using His divine power to satisfy His human need, outside the will of God
 - c) "If Jesus were to use His divine power this way, there would have been for Him no hunger, no pain, no sorrow and no cross. He would have defeated the very purpose for which He came into the world. Anyone who makes the gratification of appetite their supreme purpose is wasting their life." – C.R. Erdman
 3. It was also a temptation to doubt God's love and goodness
 - a) God is not providing
 - b) Illustration- Satan said to Eve, "For God knows that..." (Genesis 3:5)
 4. How did Jesus defeat the devil? (v. 4)
 - a) The Word of God
 - 1) (Deuteronomy 8:3)
 - 2) "Thy Word have I hid in my heart" (Psalm 119:11)
 - b) It's better to be hungry in the will of God than to be full out of the will of God
 - 1) Trust God to meet your needs
 - c) The truest satisfaction comes from doing the will of God for the glory of God, found in God's Word
 - 1) (Matthew 6:33)
 - 2) Don't let the Devil deceive you

III. The Second Temptation (Luke 4:5-8)

- A. Where does the temptation lie?
1. The lust of the eyes
 - a) "Pleasant to the eyes" (Genesis 2)
- B. Satan is offering Jesus a short cut
1. Illustration- Jesus came to redeem the world back to God
 2. How?
 - a) By the cross
 3. Satan is saying, "You don't have to suffer"
 - a) He is saying, "The end will justify the means"
 - b) It's a temptation to step out of the will of God
 - c) Jesus added, "and him only shalt thou serve"

IV. The Third Temptation (Luke 4:9-13)

- A. Matthew and Luke put the last two temptations in a different order
 - 1. Wherein lies the temptation.
 - a) The pride of life (your position)
 - b) Illustration- Satan said to Eve, “It will make you wise. You will be like God”
- B. Satan’s subtlety
 - 1. Satan now uses Scripture (Psalm 91:11-12)
 - 2. Satan misuses the Scripture
 - a) “...but we have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully” (2 Corinthians 4:2).
 - 3. What is wrong with Satan’s suggestion?
 - a) It’s presumption or placing oneself purposely, foolishly, in physical or moral danger and expecting God to deliver you or help you
 - b) It’s putting God to a test out of God’s will
 - c) Illustration- Drinking poison
 - d) Illustration- Deliberate disobedience (i.e., dating an unbeliever)
 - 4. Jesus answered the Devil with Scripture (Deuteronomy 6:16)
 - a) Remember to interpret Scripture with Scripture (v. 12)

V. Conclusion

- A. “There is no temptation taken...” (1 Corinthians 10:13)
 - 1. Three practical suggestions for dealing with temptation
- B. Expect it (v. 13)
 - 1. “...for a season...” (v. 13)
 - 2. Be sober and vigilant
- C. Detect it
 - 1. Lust of the flesh (passions)
 - 2. Lust of the eyes (possessions)
 - 3. Pride of life (position)
- D. Reject it
 - 1. The Word of God
 - a) “Thy Word” (Psalm 119:11)
 - b) “Sword of the Spirit” (Ephesians 6)
 - 2. Prayer
 - a) “Praying always” (Ephesians 6:18)
 - 3. Holy Spirit
 - a) “This I say then walk...” (Galatians 5:16)