

Scripture Readings:

Luke 4:1

“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. 3 And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." 4 But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.' " 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." 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.' " 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.' " 12 And Jesus answered and said to him, "It has been said, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.' " 13 Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time. 14 Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region.

Ephesians 6:13

“Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints--

“The Temptations of Jesus”

Using the Sword of the Spirit

We are continuing our series on the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts where we have come to Satan’s temptation of our Lord:

We looked last Lord’s Day at what the Bible teaches about Satan: Who he is... And some about who and what he is NOT!

This week we will look at the specific temptations that Jesus faced and how He responded: Learning from His great example!

And finally Lord-willing next week a look at Satan in action today!

- **This morning we must remember the important lesson from last week: Luke begins & ends this account with verses showing that Jesus was filled with and led by the Holy Spirit as we must be in our Christian life!**

With that in mind we will consider:

- 1) How did Satan tempt our Lord?**
- 2) How did Jesus respond to each?**
- 3) What is the lesson for us today?**

Satan’s first temptation is VERY similar to what he used with our first parents in the Garden of Eden:

“IF you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread!”

A clever ploy, appealing to pride while Jesus is in a weakened state: Prove yourself to be who you are; command that stone and be satisfied

The next temptation is the simple ploy that Satan had used down through the ages to deceive the nations: POWER!

[Taking Christ to the mountain and showing the Kingdoms in a moment of time should remind us of Satan's real power]

“All this authority I will give you!”

Sell your soul and have all your earthly delights fulfilled!

- **Of course the great prize here would be the destruction of God's great plan of salvation!**

The third temptation is the most deceptive of all:

Satan quotes Scripture! He quotes it acutely and in context from Psalm 91:11 “For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. 12 In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.”

- **Satan asks our Lord to commit the sin of presumption!**
- **Something that has been the downfall of many a great Christian.**

How did Jesus answer these temptations? All with Scripture!

- **It is written... It is written... It is written again!**

Using as we read this morning the “Sword of the Spirit,” the Word of God

Jesus answers the challenge to make bread with “man does not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.”

- **It is important to look at the context of this verse in Deuteronomy chapter eight:**

“1 "Every commandment which I command you today you must be careful to observe, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land of which the Lord swore to your fathers. 2 And you shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.”

[Pretty sure Jesus pondered this as He spent 40 days in the wilderness!]

3 “So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.”

- **Not just bread to eat, but understanding God’s sovereign provision over ALL our lives!**
- **Using Scripture as the “Sword of the Spirit” is not having ‘magic’ words to throw at Satan. It is using the Word of God as His Word, in faith and in full understanding of what it means.**

Luke will drive this lesson home when he shares the account of Paul’s time in Corinth in Acts chapter 19:

“13 Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches." 14 Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" 16 Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.”

- **Even the name of Jesus is powerless when used in unbelief!**

So now Satan turns to the temptation of power: Offering all the Kingdoms of the world if Jesus will simply worship Him!

Again Jesus rebukes Satan and quotes the Word of God in all its power saying “You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.”

- **How often we need to quote these words as Satan tempts us with pride and power!**

Before moving on to the third temptation I also want you to notice what Jesus did NOT do when faced with these first two temptations:

- **In the first case He did not get into a debate about whether He really was the Son of God! Nor did He point out that He really DID have the power to turn any stone into bread or even a nice rib-eye steak!**
- **In the second case He did not question whether Satan had the authority to give all that he promised. It would have been SO easy to show Satan as the false pretender that he was: The spoiled child who has stolen the keys to the family car and then offers to let you take it for a spin!**
- **We will see the importance of this lesson next week when we look at some of Satan’s modern attacks against the church and how we should properly respond.**

Finally, with the third temptation, we see Satan in all his subtlety: He quotes the Word of God itself. Maybe he figures that Jesus won’t be able to use the ‘Sword of the Spirit’ against that! But that is exactly what Christ does saying: “It has been said, ‘You shall not tempt the Lord your God.’”

You only have to spend a few minutes with a member of the Jehovah’s Witnesses or a Mormon to know that Satan and His disciples know their Bibles well: BUT they are NOT filled and led by the Holy Spirit and thus, from their lips, it is no different than just quoting from any other book.

- **So this is a pretty simple lesson to learn: The Word of God is our most effective weapon against the enemy of our faith [it is also the best defense against our other enemies of the world and the flesh]**

As we learn in the Book of Hebrews:

“... the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

We see various attacks on the Word of GOD!

- **Satan would snatch it from the path or choke it with weeds or rocks**
- **Popes have hidden it from the people**
- **Various cults have obfuscated and twisted the true meaning**

BUT, the saddest of all would be for us to NOT avail ourselves of its richness and strength when it is abundantly available!

We need to ask:

- **DO WE LOVE OUR BIBLES??**
 - ✓ **A beautiful one on the coffee table not enough!**
- **Do we READ our Bibles?**
 - ✓ **Simple routine is not enough!**
- **Do we study to show ourselves approved?**
 - ✓ **Simple head knowledge is not enough**
- **Do we move on from the milk of the Word on to the meat and maturity it offers?**
 - ✓ **This leads to the critical question...**
- **Do we OBEY the Bible?**
 - ✓ **Jesus said, “If you love me, keep My commandments!”**

And this brings us back to the important reminder that Jesus was filled and led by the Holy Spirit as we must be as well.

How serious should we be about this?

- **Satan wants to sift us like he did Peter**
- **Our flesh longs to once again wallow in the mud of sin**
- **The world attacks our faith on all fronts.**

It is very serious and we need to be serious: Jesus quoted Scripture to confound Satan each time: All of His quotations were from the Book of Deuteronomy and two of them from the same chapter: Jesus, as the Son of Man KNEW His Scriptures

➤ **How dare we think we should or can do any less!**

The sixth chapter of Deuteronomy, which Jesus knew so well, would be a good place to close this morning, as we wrestle with how serious we are going to be about using the “Sword of the Spirit,” the Word of God, in our lives and the lives of our children and grandchildren!

Let us listen carefully as Moses encourages and challenges the people of God and then let us sing together our Hymn of response: “The Son of God Goes Forth to War” which challenges us to, ‘follow in His train.’

Deuteronomy 6: 1 "Now this is the commandment, and these are the statutes and judgments which the Lord your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe them in the land which you are crossing over to possess, 2 that you may fear the Lord your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged. 3 Therefore hear, O Israel, and be careful to observe it, that it may be well with you, and that you may multiply greatly as the Lord God of your fathers has promised you--'a land flowing with milk and honey.' 4 "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! 5 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. 6 "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. 10 "So it shall be, when the Lord your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build, 11 houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant-- when you have eaten and are full-- 12 then beware, lest you forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.”

➤ **May it never be so with us!**

➤ **Let us boldly sing and commit to being those Saints who follow in His train!**

Communion meditation:

Deuteronomy 28:47-48 “**45** Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you. **46** And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder, and on your descendants forever. **47** “Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything, **48** therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the Lord will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything; and He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you.