

The Temptation of Jesus

Lesson 3

Read Luke 4:1-13.

It was an epic struggle between Jesus and the devil. This confrontation may seem obscure to modern readers, but it is remarkably relevant to the lives we live today.

I. A lesson on *identifying sin*

A. What was so wrong with Satan's idea? Is turning stones into bread such a big deal?

1. First, it should be noted that Jesus never performed a miracle for either sensational or self-serving reasons.
2. Miracles were pictures of the kingdom and credentials of Jesus' power. There is always a "kingdom purpose" behind every miracle.
3. Miracles were never intended to undermine simple trust in God's day-to-day provisions.

B. The three tests offer shortcuts to something Jesus wanted badly:

1. Food without work.
2. A crown without a cross.
3. Glory without trust.

C. All three proposals are detours, bypassing trust in God to provide basic needs (food), power (kingdom), or glory (angelic protection).

1. All three propositions necessitate a violation of trust.
2. They offer an alternative to patiently waiting on God to provide in His own time and in His own way.
3. *Sin, at its root, is a violation of trust in God and His benevolent provision.*

II. A lesson on *overcoming sin*

A. At issue in two of three temptations is Jesus' divine Sonship ("If you are the Son of God...")

1. Jesus refused to take the bait and play the devil's game by the devil's rules on the devil's playing field.
2. Our Lord knew who He was, and He did not need to prove it to Himself or Satan.
3. Consequently, He did not utilize a superhuman arsenal to ward off Satan's ploys.

B. Jesus won the victory over temptation on the *human* level, just like we must do. There were two keys to victory.

1. Sheer determination. Jesus never sinned because He did not want to sin!
2. Appeal to the Word of God. Every temptation is thwarted with a citation from Scripture.

C. We can win the victory, too! Sometimes, temptation may seem insurmountable, but we can overcome, the same way Jesus did. Cf. I Cor. 10:13.

III. A lesson on *accurately handling* the word of truth (cf. II Tim. 2:15)

A. Jesus is not the only one who cites Scripture in this encounter. Satan diabolically misapplies Psalm 91:11-12 in an effort to get Jesus to jump off the pinnacle of the Temple.

1. Ps. 91 is a psalm about trust – cf. Ps. 91:2, 13, etc.
2. Satan tries to get Jesus to force God’s hand and violate the very trust spoken about in the psalm!

B. Satan’s misuses the Scripture three ways:

1. He takes a *figurative* passage *literally*
2. He takes a *complete* passage *partially* (entirely out of context)
3. He takes a *conditional* promise (e.g., faith is required) *unconditionally*. People still misuse and misapply the Bible in the same ways. Beware!

C. Jesus, on the other hand, uses the Bible as a “lamp” to His feet and a “light” to His path (cf. Ps. 119:105).

1. His use of the Bible shows a profound respect for its authority and practical application.
 2. Also, every citation comes from Deuteronomy – 6:13; 6:16; and 8:3.
 3. Notice especially Deuteronomy 8
 - a. God had tested the Israelites in the wilderness, to see if they would keep His commandments (8:2).
 - b. He preserved their clothing and protected their health (8:4).
 - c. He also fed them with manna from above, so that they might learn how to depend totally on Him (8:3). Manna was not “bread alone,” gained apart from the Father’s care. It was intended to teach *trust* – the very kind Satan did not want Jesus to exercise!
 4. The Israelites in the OT did not always practice this total dependence on God because they were short on faith. Not so with Jesus.
 5. The victory He won shows that God’s Word is powerful, effective, and relevant. We need the same Word to win the victory today.
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Extra Notes for Teachers:

<u>Israel</u>	<u>Jesus</u>
• Corporate “Son” (Hosea 11:1)	Beloved Son (Matt. 2:15)
• Out of Egypt	Out of Egypt
• “Baptized” in cloud and sea	Baptized in the Jordan by John
• 40 years of wilderness deprivation	40 days of wilderness deprivation
• Testing in the wilderness	Testing in the wilderness
• Failure	Victory
• DEUTERONOMY	DEUTERONOMY