

The Temptations of Jesus Christ (Part I)

Luke 4:3-4

1. Introduction.

- a. Many come to this passage looking for personal application. Yet, it is first and foremost a portrait of Jesus Christ.
- b. In this midst of much guilt, and falling back into the sin that can so often haunt us, this is a passage of Scripture that we can go to and remind ourselves of why our pardon of sin has nothing to do with us. Rather, it has everything to do with Jesus Christ—the One Who has perfectly overcome every temptation to sin; and yet, on our behalf.

2. Review:

- a. Last time we saw the characters—Jesus and the devil.
- b. We saw the setting—the Jeshimon (i.e., the desert wilderness).
- c. We saw the purpose—freshly commissioned at His baptism (3:21-22), Jesus was to be tested before he formally launched His public ministry.
- d. The entire time, Jesus was being tempted by the Devil.

3. Jesus' testing and hunger (2b).

- a. “When they had ended (συντελέω).”
 - i. These temptations and trials were sovereignly appointed by God. Not only was Jesus driven into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted, but there was a predetermined allotment of time Jesus was to be tested, as well as, a predetermined amount of testing He had to endure.
 - ii. The term συντελέω means there was a heavy sense of completion in Luke's mind. In other words, there was a fulfillment of testing Jesus had to endure and complete.

1. This, of course, implies there is great purpose in trials.

2. Hebrews 5:8-9.

- a. The purpose of Jesus' suffering was to learn obedience. He had to be made perfect (i.e. fully sanctified).
 - b. It was not until He was perfected in the flesh that He would be an acceptable sacrifice.
- 3. James 1:2-4. This is true for us as well.
 - a. The goal of our testing is to produce perfection (c.f., Heb. 12:14).
 - b. This is why we can take joy in our trials.
- b. Jesus becomes hungry, but not until the 40 days of trials were completed.
 - i. His focus prevented the hunger (Jn. 4:34).
 - ii. After He resists for 40 days, perhaps the devil pulls back. As a result, Jesus relaxes. As He does, He becomes hungry. Yet it's at this point, in which the Devil (true to his nature) draws near to tempt.
- 4. The Devil's first line of deceit (3).
 - a. In order to understand how this is a true temptation, you need to understand the way in which the Devil frames the statement.
 - i. He states the command with a 1st class conditional (i.e., "if/then" statement).
 - ii. The point, then, is the devil knows exactly Who Jesus is. He knows that Jesus is the Son of God.
 - iii. The center of the attack, then, is to get Jesus to doubt the Father's love for Him as the truly beloved (c.f., 3:21-22).
 - 1. If He is the Son of God, then God should provide for Him.
 - 2. After all, he provided for Israel in this very same wilderness.
 - 3. Being the perfectly obedient Son, the Devil wants Jesus to recognize that the Father doesn't seem to be providing for Him as His beloved Son.

4. This is the focus of the temptation.
5. Jesus' response (4).
 - a. Picking up on an Old Testament situation in which Israel was in the same predicament, Jesus preaches truth to Himself—showing Himself to be the faithful Israel.
 - b. Walk through Deuteronomy 8:2-3.
6. Conclusion.
 - a. Jesus is the model.
 - b. But more than being a model, Jesus becomes our perfect substitute because He endured.
 - i. So while we might fail and fall into sin, we can look to this portrait of our perfect Savior.
 - ii. If you're in Jesus Christ, whenever you may fail, the eternal reality is that you've still overcome.