

The Genealogy and Temptation of Christ

Luke 3:23–4:13 (ESV)

INTRODUCTION: As some of you may know, I am highly interested in history of all kinds and I draw from that study often in my sermons. What you may not know is that I am also a student of genealogy. I'm that guy in our family that bores everyone else to tears over our incessant attempt to connect all of the dots in the family tree.

My father once told me, "Son, I wish you would leave that stuff alone, you are likely to find something you don't want to find!"

Well that hasn't happened yet. So far, I have found that I am in the lineage of Davey Crockett, one of the defenders of the Alamo. Lady Bess of Hardwick, Countess of Shrewsbury. One of the most powerful non royal women in British history.

But my favorite discovery came from an email I received several months ago. I had submitted my DNA for testing via [23andme.com](https://www.23andme.com) which places you in a database with millions of others and ranks you by genetic relation. So I could see based on DNA who my first cousins were, which side of the family, which member of the family they descended from and so on.

Well, one day I received an email from a lady in Austin, TX who indicated that the DNA test revealed that we were cousins on my mother's side. She then asked if I had a great uncle who lived in Chicago in the 1950's. Turns out this lady had been raised by an adoptive family. She had identified her mother, but never her father. This DNA test was her last ditch effort to connect the dots.

Well, I did have a great uncle in Chicago in the 1950's, but he never had any children... or so we thought. I asked if she might be willing to send me a pic so I could see if there was any resemblance to my Uncle Dempsey Berryman. When the photos came in the resemblance was absolutely undeniable. I needed no DNA evidence to believe that she was his daughter.

I had preached Dempsey's funeral a few years earlier, I was able to tell her about him and find all of the unique ways things that father and daughter had in common though they never met.

Her genealogy was important to her - if not to anyone else.
My genealogy is important to me - if not to anyone else.

And while I can't ask you to value my family tree, there is one that should be to you of utmost importance. The genealogy of Jesus Christ.

AS SUCH, Neither genealogy is necessarily exhaustive. If you compare the two, you will see that Luke includes more names than does Matthew. And that was common for genealogy.

ILLUSTRATION: If you asked me how to get to Orlando, I may say go to Daytona and turn West. Or I may say, Cross the bridge into Yulee, Go south on 95 to Jacksonville, continue past St. Augustine... you see? Both are accurate. One is more exhaustive.

- **Numerical Arrangement**

- **Matthew's genealogy has 42 different names** written in three sets of 14. Probably because the name DAVID (in Hebrew DVD, no vowel's) has a numerical equivalent of 14.

Matthew 1:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

So Matthew breaks the genealogy up into three movements -

- The Kingdom Given - via David
- The Kingdom Scattered - via Deportation
- The Kingdom Reestablished - via Christ

In the same way Jesus would come as a new David, be rejected, thus the Kingdom would be scattered, then he will come again regathering the kingdom of Israel.

- **Luke has 77 different names** - The reasoning has been given that 77 is 7 (the number of completeness times 11. Why 11? Well the Jews commonly held that history would go through 12 different stages. A day has 24 hours, 12 light 12 dark, a year has 12 months, 12 tribes of Israel, 12 disciples go out, 12 times 12,000 preachers in Revelation - 144,000.

The Jews saw 12 as the organizational unit. They believed history was divided into 12 movements, the 12th being the coming of Messiah. Luke gives you 77 names. 11 different groups. The last name that would begin the 12th movement - was Jesus Christ.

B. Commonalities Between the Genealogies of Luke and Matthew - In both genealogies every single name is that of a sinner who ultimately died. Well that is true of every genealogy is it not? Death runs in everybody's family.

If you are a descendant of royalty - the funerals are fancier, but the subject is no less dead. If you were abandoned as an orphan - you may know nothing of our lineage,

but I can tell you this, death visited each and every one.

ILLUSTRATION: In fact, I heard of an occasion when a genealogy was being read from the OT. To one many in the congregation who didn't typically come to church, something stood out. The incessant rhythm of death

Genesis 5:5–8 (ESV)

⁵ Thus all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, *and he died....*

⁸ Thus all the days of Seth were 912 years, *and he died...*

It goes on and on, non stop... in the midst of the reading a man ran to the alter and began to pray. A deacon knelt down to counsel him and said, "What is going on friend?" He said, "All the death, they all die, one day I will die... and I'm not ready".

Well every individual in the human genealogy of Jesus was a sinner. In fact between the two genealogies we see some pretty interesting sinners.

NOAH v.36 - the Ark builder who after the trauma of the flood. Imagine seeing every living soul you know drown to death. Well afterward, he plants a vineyard, turns the juice to wine and gets plastered in a cave. What happens next when Ham entered is alluded to, but hidden behind the veil of history. But the phrase Ham, "Looked on his father's nakedness" was an OT euphemism for sex. We aren't sure if Ham violated his father or his father's wife. But it likely meant one of the two. Ham's son would be forever cursed as a result. Think you family has skeleton's in the closet? Noah is in the genealogy of the Messiah.

ABRAHAM v.34 - One of the ways we can discern that the scriptures aren't just fairy tales, is that when someone makes a story up, they typically do so to make their people look favorable. But the father of the Jewish people is Abraham who twice betrayed his wife Sarah and handed her over to another man.

DAVID v.31 - David, a man after God's own heart. David the giant slayer. David the man slain by his own lust while gazing on the wife of another man. Stooping so low as to have the man killed to cover up his sin.

And if those are shocking, don't even look at **Matthew chapter 1**. There we see...

TAMAR v.3 a woman of the night. An adult entertainer. A harlot.

RUTH v. 5 a Moabite woman, from a people cursed by God. The Moabites were called, "God's wash pot" or in other words God's Latrine.

BATHSHEBA v.6 The wife of Uriah who had an affair with King David.

Those are just to name a few. When I told you my descendants I told you of the best! I didn't tell you of the worst. But the fact is there are more of the worst ones than the best ones.

And here in the genealogy of Jesus we see sinner after sinner, death after death. Why? Well that's all God has to work with. All have sinned!

BUT THAT IS ALSO WHY THE ACCOUNT THAT FOLLOWS THE GENEALOGY IS SO IMPORTANT.

2. The Temptation of Jesus Christ

TEXT: Luke 3:23–4:13 (ESV)

¹ And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan

Now that is very important. We will see several clues for fighting temptation in today's text, but none so important as the fact that Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit. Remember we said a few weeks ago, that Jesus did what he did, not primarily through his own auspices and power, but as you must, relying completely on the filling of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit came upon him at his Baptism and remained on him throughout his life.

1b. and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness

Now as a student of scripture, your mind should light up when you read that. Where else in the Bible were people traveling into the wilderness... not forty days, but forty years?

- **The Second Israel** - So there is a sense in which this account is presenting Christ as a second Israel. Israel had manna from heaven during their wilderness journey. Christ had no food. In fact, the verses Jesus uses to respond to temptation were all from Deuteronomy, and the passage that dealt with the wilderness wanderings. You see how Jesus uses scripture? He found where the Bible spoke to a circumstance similar to what he was going through and dug deep into it. Memorized it.
- **The Second Adam** - There is also a sense that this story will hearken back to the temptation of Adam in the garden. A conversation, a temptation, with Satan himself. In fact the nature of the two temptations are very similar.

² for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry.

Jesus gave himself to a 40 day fast. Never underestimate the place and the power of fasting in the life of a believer. Jesus believed in it. Jesus practiced it. Jesus said, "after I am gone my followers will fast". The body does some interesting things when

you fast. The first 3 days are the most difficult, you are confused, hungry, distracted. After about 3 days, your hunger subsides. In fact, in many ways you gain more focus and alertness, you don't seem to need sleep as much.

After 30 days or so, the hunger returns. It is then that you are in real physical danger. You see, most of us have never been truly hungry. We have had strong cravings, but true hunger is another thing entirely. Jesus has not eaten in 40 days. He is hungry. If he doesn't eat he will die. But the Holy Spirit hasn't released him from the fast.

It is then at this moment of human weakness that Satan visits him. BTW, that is when he will visit you as well. The two times a person is in greatest danger of a spiritual attack is at a moment of great weakness or great victory.

³ The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."

Now remember - the genealogy was an aside. What happened in chronology just prior to the temptation? The Baptism. Where God the Father spoke from Heaven - THIS IS MY BELOVED SON. Satan knows exactly who Jesus is. He always has.

The temptation is to use His authority as Messiah to serve Himself, to relieve the pressure. Well, turning stones into bread doesn't sound so bad. But if Jesus could snap his fingers and end his own suffering *where might that lead when He is called to bear the cross?*

ILLUSTRATION: I've always chastised my kids when they use the snooze button. I think the Devil himself had the snooze button added to alarm clocks. Just 5 more minutes. I believe more people have dropped out of college, lost their jobs, lost their marriage over the snooze button, than practically anything we deal with as humans. WHY? It sets a horrible precedent. It's a little compromise that leads to a greater. If I were King I would make it illegal to install snooze buttons on alarm clocks.

Well, Satan is saying, "Chill out Jesus... hit the snooze button" just one time. Get some relief.

⁴ And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'"

Jesus will answer every temptation by quoting **Deuteronomy** from memory. Why Deuteronomy? That is the passage that focuses on the 40 years in the wilderness. You see how Jesus used the Bible? He found a passage similar to His own place in life. Young men, read Proverbs. Old men, read Ecclesiastes. New wives mediate on Pro. 31. You see?

⁵ And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, ⁶ and said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has

been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. ⁷ If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.”

Adam had dominion over the face of the earth. When Adam listened to and obeyed the word of Satan, he in fact handed over that Dominion to Satan, making him the Prince of this World. Now Jesus arrived. Satan is making Jesus a legit offer. He would make Jesus the ruler of the World in return for one thing - worship.

Never judge a person too harshly that has been tempted with Satan worship. That temptation came to our Lord as well.

The only threat to the dominion of Satan was the sonship of Jesus. He came to reclaim everything that Adam had lost. What the forbidden fruit was to Adam, this moment of worship was to Jesus. By worshipping Satan he would relinquish any legal claim he had as redeemer and King.

⁸ And Jesus answered him, “It is written, “ ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.’ ”

⁹ And he took him 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, ¹⁰ for it is written, “ ‘He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,’ ¹¹ and “ ‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’ ”

Now Satan, is using some spiritual Judo on Jesus. Twice Jesus had resisted by wielding the sword of the Spirit the Word of God. Now Satan uses Jesus own weapon against him. Satan quotes, or I should say misquotes, scripture.

Now that is a quote from...

Psalm 91:11–13 (ESV)

¹¹ For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. ¹² On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.

Interestingly, Satan leaves out the next verse...

¹³ You will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot.

Lion, adders, serpents all euphemisms for satan and demons.

The Christian is in greatest danger when he begins to use the Word of God to endorse his own sin and rebellion.

This temptation is unique. Some have suggested that Satan is tempting Jesus to perform some sort of very spectacular sign to cause the people to recognize who he

is. I don't agree with that view. You see, the response of Jesus referred to this being some sort of a putting the Father to the test.

In other words, force the Father to PROVE you are the Son of God... to YOU by casting yourself down.

Remember, three times Satan had said, "If you are the Son of God". What I think is happening here is Satan is tempting Jesus to doubt who Jesus is.

¹² And Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

¹³ And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

Demonic Temptation works that way. Satan has his limits. He can't be everywhere, he isn't all powerful, he isn't omniscient. You must remember, that resistance happens in bursts.

ILLUSTRATION: Right now sitting in church, listening to the preaching of the Word, your temptation meter is probably relatively low. You probably aren't really wrestling with stealing from the offering boxes, or picking up another man's wife. Let's say on a scale from one to ten, your temptation is a 2. Very easy to resist.

But you will be visited. That temptation will turn from a 2, to a 8, 9, or even 10. We tend to forget that Satan can't keep it at a 10 forever. It will come back down.

Hebrews 12:3–4 (ESV)

³ Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. ⁴ In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

CONCLUSION/INVITATION:

In the wilderness, Satan turned the heat up on Jesus to a 10 and kept it there as long as he could. Jesus resisted faithfully. Satan left for a more opportune time. One of those times was in Gethsemane. There the temptation was turned up to a 20. In his resistance Jesus sweat as it were drops of blood. WHY? Why not given in? He wasn't in the habit of giving in. He didn't hit the snooze button. He didn't turn stones into bread. He didn't take spiritual short cuts. He didn't put His Father to the test.

So when it came down to whether or not he would drink the cup of the WRATH of GOD on your behalf.... He could say, "Not my will by thine be done..."