

A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

An Expository Study of **The Gospel According to Luke** **Chapter 4- Luke 4:3-13**

40- The Temptation of Jesus Christ- Part 3

August 2, 2009

Luke 4:3-13

When people ask the question, "*How do we know the Bible is true?*", some would answer that question by pointing to all of the fulfilled prophecy- things that have come to pass that were predicted in the Bible. Somebody else might say, "*Because of its historical accuracy.*" Which points to facts that we have uncovered from various archeological discoveries that prove the names, dates, places, and events happened exactly as the Bible says that they happened.

Still others might say, "*Oh, it's the scientific accuracy in a non-scientific world.*" For example, the most sacred book in all of Islam- the Koran- says that God placed the earth on the backs of elephants while the oldest book in the Holy Bible, **Job**, written during the patriarchal period and written some 3100 years before Muhammad wrote the Koran says in **Job 26:7** that God "**hangs the earth on nothing.**" Or in other words- nothing but space holds the world up. And since the advent of modern science- we have learned that, in fact, there are no celestial elephants holding up the earth, but that the entire world hangs out in space- supported by nothing.

And so some would use that and many, many other facts and say the great evidence of the veracity of Scripture is in its "*scientific accuracy in a non-scientific age.*" And there might be some other answers as well- such as its miraculous element- and so on.

But I really believe that the single most compelling element about Scripture is the Person of Jesus Christ. You see, every character that has ever been devised by the human mind is somehow flawed. Somehow everything that we touch comes out just like us to one degree or another. And it is beyond possibility that mankind could *invent* a Person like Jesus Christ as He is portrayed on the pages of Scripture.

His Person is so Perfect, His Wisdom is so Profound, His Response to every single event is so perfectly consistent with Divine Nature that it is inconceivable that a man or a group of men could simply *invent* Jesus Christ. And it is even far less possible than that- that demons could invent a Man like Jesus and pull some monumental deception on the human race in the form of Scripture.

No, Jesus Christ as a Person is so compelling, so profound, so perfect as to be beyond the possibility of human invention. And that means that He must, therefore, be real.

And the Perfections of Jesus Christ shows up everywhere. We've seen it again and again and again through three Chapters in **The Gospel of Luke** already, and we've just started. And so we come now to the section on the great Temptation of Jesus where His Perfection reaches a new level- as He engages Himself in conflict with His archenemy- the enemy of God Himself- the fallen angel by the name of Lucifer- who has become the devil and satan, and who engages in conflict with Jesus for the purpose of destroying Him.

And as we have already studied- satan did not seek out Jesus here- no, on the contrary- Jesus sought out satan. Now in every case where we humans are confronted by satan or with temptation- satan seeks us out. Satan initiates every confrontation with us. According to the **Book of Job**- the devil has to first go to God to get permission on how much or how long or to what extent he may trouble us, and God allows satan to go this far but no further.

But here Jesus came looking for satan; Jesus initiated this meeting or better yet- God the Holy Ghost initiated this confrontation with satan by leading Jesus into the wilderness. Luke tells us in **Luke 4:1** that Jesus was led by the Spirit of God to go into the wilderness and confront the devil- so that Jesus could destroy all of his power in this one single event.

Now satan loves to torment us, satan loves to tempt us, satan loves to provide an opportunity for us to act out on what is in our hearts to begin with. But here- in this case- satan would have done *anything* to avoid this confrontation- because he knew that he was absolutely no match for the sinless Lamb of God.

So even in this moment of great human weakness- after fasting for 40 days- Jesus stands in His majesty and in His Perfections and in His Beauty as He systematically annihilates the devil and all his power.

So even here- the Person of Jesus stands out as being the central Character of all human history and that causes me to know that the Bible is true.

As I have said before- the issue here in this conflict is can this Man- Jesus Christ- save sinners from sin? Can He save sinners from the destroyer? Can He deliver our eternal souls from death and hell? That's the *real* question- and the only question that has eternal ramifications. Can Jesus overturn the Curse? Can He acquire Paradise for us? Can Jesus not only walk this world in white Himself- but can He pardon my guilt and purchase eternal life for me- even though I have *not* walked this world in white? Can this man undo what the destroyer did with the first Adam? Can Jesus conquer Satan? Can He conquer sin, and, therefore, conquer death, and, therefore, conquer hell not only for Himself- but for all who trust in Him?

Now in his famous book, Paradise Regained, John Milton expresses the purpose of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness and he does so in the following words, as though spoken by God His Father. Milton writes as if God is speaking,

"But first I mean to exercise Him in the wilderness. There He shall first lay down the rudiments of His great warfare, ere I send Him forth to conquer sin and death, the two grand foes by humiliation and strong suffering,"

Well, the wisdom of John Milton is obviously legendary and Milton had it right. God sent forth His Son for His exercise in the wilderness in which He would defeat the devil and then demonstrate there the power for the great warfare in which He would on the Cross forever conquer sin and at the grave forever conquer death.

So the logic goes- if Jesus would triumph in the wilderness- then He would also triumph at Calvary and He would also triumph in the Garden. So because Jesus triumphed here in this confrontation in the wilderness- Jesus also would triumph at the Cross and triumph at the tomb.

And if Jesus can conquer Satan- then those of us who have repeatedly failed to obey the Law of God perfectly and continuously and are nothing more than transgressors of the Law- we can then be absolutely assured of that great Triumph and God- through the Glorious finished Work of Jesus Christ- may regain Paradise for us!

And as we are learning here from **Luke 4**- Jesus did, in fact, triumph in this wilderness, and later we will learn that He also triumphed at the Cross where He bruised Satan's head with a fatal wound and where He destroyed the domination of sin forever and where He alone provided an escape from hell for all who believe.

And then we will learn that Jesus also conquered death- rising the third day- and is now bodily ascended into Heaven where He *continues* to conquer all sin and all accusation laid against His people because He ever lives to make intercession for us!

So that in His securing Love, in His conquering Grace- we are more than conquerors for whom nothing can ever separate us from His eternal Love!

So the ability that Jesus had to conquer is first demonstrated right here in this wilderness. Now we understand that for 30 years up to this moment- Jesus was tempted in all points like as we are- but we never had an insight into any of those experiences from Luke.

But now for the first time- we see His conquering Power in a most formidable conflict with the enemy and this conflict sets in motion all the rest of His conquering- at the Cross, at the Tomb, and now in Heaven itself where He conquers by Grace and Mercy extended toward His own- so that all sin and all accusations are forever settled- so that we, too, are more than conquerors in His eternal love.

But, as great as that is- there is still more. Because in the future- this same Jesus will come back as King over all human kings and Lord over all human lords- returning to this earth at which point He will conquer all ungodliness, He will conquer all the ungodly, He will destroy all unredeemed sinners, He will send them to the Lake of Fire, He will send all demons to the Lake of Fire, He will send the beast and the false prophet, the Antichrist and his henchmen to the Lake of Fire, He will send the devil himself to the Lake of Fire, and He will then destroy this sin-stained universe.

It will literally go up in an atomic holocaust, the elements will melt with fervent heat and in its place He will recreate a new heaven and a new earth of holiness and righteousness alone which will last forever. That will be His final great conquering of evil.

So you see, what happens here in this time of temptation- is a foretaste of what is to come through all of the great events of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ- the Savior of the world. And the reason

that we firmly believe that Jesus will conquer in the future is because He has conquered in the past, and this is where it all begins right here.

It's as if the guarantee of His future conquerings was established in the event of His 40 day temptation in the wilderness when satan came and hit him with the full fury of his best assaults. Jesus withstood them all triumphantly.

Now let me read **Luke 4:1-13** to you again because it is such an important and powerful passage:

1 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness

2 for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry.

3 And the devil said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.”

4 And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE.’”

5 And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said to Him, “I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.

7 Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours.”

8 Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD AND SERVE HIM ONLY.’”

9 And he led Him to Jerusalem and had Him stand 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, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.’”

12 And Jesus answered and said to him, “It is said, ‘YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.’”

13 When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time.

Now not only is this proof and a guarantee of Jesus' Power, but as I said last time- this moment is also the evidence that Jesus is, in fact, the Son of God. Now you remember that in the event that happened just before this- back in **Luke 3:21&22**- Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by John. And at the time of His baptism, God Almighty spoke out of Heaven in an audible Voice and said, " **This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.**" So here the Owner and Creator of the Universe had affirmed Jesus as being His Son. Now this is a monumental statement by God. This is not a common statement- but this is an *uncommon* statement. This is absolutely unique. God has never spoken this about anybody else in all of human history- only Jesus.

Now maybe just a little bit of background is warranted here. Jesus is called the Son of God about 80 times throughout the 27 Books of the New Testament. It is a very common title for Jesus- about 80 times. And fifty-one times in the first three Gospels and over 100 times in **John** alone- Jesus speaks of God as being His Own personal Father- for a total of 151 times in the four Gospels. So this is a very, very common attachment in the Bible- Jesus as being the Son of God and Jesus calling God His Father.

Now let me just tell you. This is a very remarkable thing. For Jesus to claim to be the Son of God was very remarkable. For Him to call God "My Father" was remarkable. And there are many things that we can get out of this. For example- for Jesus to call God His Father and for God to call Jesus His Son expresses eternal Deity, and it expresses the sameness of Nature of both God and Jesus.

So please let me put this all in perspective for you. Two times in the Old Testament- just two times throughout the entire 39 books of the Old Testament- God is *directly* addressed as Father. That's all- only two times. Fifteen times throughout the entire Old Testament- the term "Father" is used to describe God *indirectly*- but never is any of those expressions of God as Father made by any individual.

Whenever God is referred to as Father, it is as the Father of the nation of Israel, never as the Father of an individual human being. There is no example in existence in all of Jewish history of anyone ever addressing God as "My Father" in a personal, individual way. But Jesus did that all the time. So Jesus had a relationship with God that no one had ever had.

Now to the Jewish mind- for anyone to say, *"God is my Father,"* would be to say *"I have the very same Nature as God Himself, and I share the same Essence as God,"* or in other words- *"I am Deity like God is Deity!"* This is the same in the human realm where a son shares his father's nature genetically. And no Jew worth his salt would ever say that- because to say that you are Deity like God is Deity was blasphemy- which was punishable by death by stoning. But Jesus constantly called God His Father- 151 times such a relationship is indicated in the Gospels.

And furthermore, Jesus not only called God His Father, but He used the term "Abba" which means, "papa", or "daddy", which is an even more intimate and endearing title than Father.

Now many people today are confused about whether or not Jesus actually called God His Father. I was on a discussion panel on the radio about this issue a number of years ago- where both the other guest speaker- who was a Pastor- and the moderator- who was a station manager of a Christian radio station both said that Jesus never said that God was His Father.

But even though these people may be confused about this issue- the Jews of Jesus' day were certainly not confused. They understood very clearly that Jesus absolutely called God His Father- and they also knew that by saying that- that Jesus was making Himself to be equal with God- which is precisely why they wanted to kill Him. Please turn with me and read **John 5:18**:

For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.

This is why over and over- the Jews accused Jesus of being a blasphemer because when He called God His Father- He was making Himself equal with God. That's exactly what He's doing. And for Him to speak to God as *"Abba"* was beyond tolerance. You see, to the Jew- the most formidable doctrine in all of Judaism is the Shema. The most formidable doctrine in all of Judaism is **Deuteronomy 6:4** which says:

Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!

This verse is what sets Judaism apart from all the polytheistic false religions of the world. Judaism is monotheistic- meaning the worship of one God as opposed to being polytheistic- meaning the worship of more than one god.

And that is what the Jews have always celebrated- that the Lord God of the Old Testament- is One. And so for some lowly carpenter's son to come along and say, "**I am the Son of God and God is my Father,**" would be unthinkable to a Jew and would be the height of blasphemy.

And yet the Apostle John boldly says this about Jesus in **John 1:**

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 He was in the beginning with God.

3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.

14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

And then again in **1John 1:1&2:**

1 What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life—

2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—

And then in **John 5:23-** Jesus said:

... so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

Now this is just beyond all imagination. For anyone to honor the Son the same way that they honor the Father is to say that the Son is equal to the Father and worthy of the same honor as that given to the Father. So by saying this- Jesus was clearly teaching that He was perfectly equal in all ways to the one true living God of Israel- including even in His Nature and Essence.

Now this was completely outside the understanding that the Jews had about the Nature and Essence of God with all that had been revealed to them in the 39 Books of the Old Covenant which taught a monotheistic religion. And that is why The Doctrine of the Trinity is so vitally important for us today.

Understand that this is not a side issue- dear friends. If Jesus is fully God- then there are either two Gods or else the Doctrine of the Trinity is true. And if the Holy Ghost is God- then either we have three gods- or The Doctrine of the Trinity is true.

And if the Doctrine of the Trinity is false- then Jesus is not Yahweh with a body. And if Jesus is not Yahweh with a human body- then we are still lost and we are yet in our sins because the Apostle Paul said that we must confess with our mouths that Jesus is Lord or in other words- that Jesus is God in human form - or else we cannot be saved. That is why this matters.

So this is what set the Jew's teeth on edge against Jesus. They could not accept that Jesus was God- and to this day- the Jew still cannot accept that. The modern Jew- along with the Muslim and the Buddhist and The Hindu and the atheist and the rest of all the pagans will praise Jesus all day long as an humanitarian, or as a prophet, or as a good man, or as a rabbi, or as a teacher, or as a political anarchist, or as a community organizer, or as a moral example.

But without exception- none of these groups will fully embrace Jesus as God- and that is why they cannot be saved in those demonic religions.

The Apostle Paul taught in **Romans 10:9** that all who are truly born again by the Spirit of God must confess with their mouths that Jesus Christ is Lord, that He is Yahweh with a body, and that He is fully God and fully Man.

And yet Jesus continues to say it over and over. In **John 10:30**- Jesus said:

I and the Father are one.

And in the very next verse- the Bible says:

John 10:31

The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him.

Why did the Jews want to stone Jesus? For feeding the hungry? No. For raising the dead? No. For healing the sick? No. Because Jesus forgave sin, and because Jesus acted like He was God, and because Jesus said that God was His Father, and that He was God's One and Only Son.

And the Jew saw that as blasphemy. In **John 14** Jesus says, "**He who has seen Me has seen the Father**", another of the same kind of statement. In **John 15:22**- Jesus said

22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.

23 He who hates Me hates My Father also.

And on and on it goes. **John 17:5**

Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

And the way **The Gospel of John** comes to its finale- in **John 20:28** is just as clear as it can be as Thomas bows his knees down on the ground and worships Jesus and says:

... My Lord and my God.

Now if Jesus knew that He was not God- then He would have been encouraging a man to commit idolatry by worshipping Him here. And if Jesus was delusional and only thought that He was God- then Jesus needed to be on medication, and Thomas would be guilty of idolatry. Only if Jesus was, in fact, God would this act of worship be acceptable.

And then down in verse 31- John says,

But these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

Now listen, there is one great reality in the Gospel, and that is that Jesus is the Son of God. That is to say He is equal in Nature and Essence with God. He possesses the same Divine Nature as God. When He claimed to be the Son of God, the Jews knew exactly what He was

claiming- they knew that He was claiming to be equal with God and it was for that that they wanted to destroy Him.

So when satan tempted Jesus- he was not questioning whether Jesus was the Son of God. When you read the text in verse 3, "**If You are the Son of God,**" or you read it again down further in verse 9, "**If You are the Son of God,**" as I told you last time- that is what is called a first-class conditional with a particle "a" that allows for no doubt.

So these two verses are better translated, "Since." And not "If". So what satan was actually saying here is "**Since you are the Son of God- do this and that.**" So the devil doesn't question whether Jesus is the Son of God at all- because he knows firsthand Who Jesus is. Satan knew Jesus in Heaven before God made the earth when he was the unfallen arch angel- Lucifer- and Jesus was simply God the Son. And now as satan and the devil- he knows Jesus full well.

He knows exactly Who Jesus is and so do all the demons that roam the earth. And I've told you before- there is never an occasion in the entire Bible when demons ever questioned Jesus being as the Son of God. Only deceived people are confused about that; only liberal theologians are confused about that; only lukewarm and backslid church members are confused about that. But the devil is not confused- he knows the facts.

So the purpose of these temptations here in **Luke 4** was not to make Jesus *doubt* His Sonship. And neither was it to make Jesus *prove* His Sonship. For *us* it proves His Sonship- but not to Him. The purpose of these temptations was to make Jesus challenge the Love of God and step out of His humiliation and act on His own- apart from the Will of the Father and apart from the Power of the Spirit- thereby putting a breach in the Trinity. That was the temptation.

And I've said this in the past and I'll say it again here today. The devil is lost, dear friends; he is lost and cannot ever be saved. He rebelled in Heaven and was cast down into the earth, and God will not ever grant satan the gift of faith, and so he cannot and will not ever repent.

God has graciously *granted* you the gift of faith whereby you may repent. And that is the only reason why any of us ever repented and got saved- because God mercifully *granted* you the ability to repent and believe. So please do not squander that gift, do not waste it, and do not live your life presuming on God's Mercy. Walk softly before God and do

not tempt the Lord- but love Him and serve Him with meekness and gladness of heart.

So you and I have been wondrously given the gift of faith- but satan has not been given that gift, and, therefore - he cannot repent, and, therefore he cannot be saved. He is doomed to spend eternity in Hell. But even though he is lost and cannot ever be saved- his theology is perfectly orthodox and biblical. Satan believes wholeheartedly in the Trinity. And he believes fully in the Deity of Jesus Christ. And he believes in these things so much- the Bible says- that he trembles.

And that is what disturbs me so much about what is being taught in the modern Church. What we believe has made us arrogant and self centered and prideful- always lusting after more of this world's goods, and more of this world's praise, and more of this world's attention and acceptance. Our teaching has made us to not be content with that which God has already provided- but promotes covetousness and a love of money. Our theology has made us expect God to always heal our bodies, fix our mistakes, financially prosper us, and allow us to accumulate more material goods- without any regard to the Will of God, the cause of Jesus Christ, or our own development in Biblical holiness.

And that bad theology, that man-made theology, that man-centered theology has not caused us to fear God, and, therefore- we no longer tremble before Him. We no longer stand in awe of God; we are not impressed with His Perfections- we seek our own. We do not seek that which will bring God glory- we seek after those things that will benefit us- and God needs to hop to it to give them to us.

Many today do not bless God *in* their sufferings or *for* their sufferings because they have been taught that by virtue of being a believer- that they are *exempt* from suffering. Many do not rejoice in persecutions; we do not celebrate the straight and narrow path- we are no troubled by worldliness; we are no longer grateful for being rescued from the horror of our sins and the horror of unbelief through the savage and brutal and violent murder of the Lamb of God- because we really don't think sin is that big a deal and we really don't think we are that bad- so instead- we very impatiently stand around and wonder what God has done for us lately, and we honestly think that as good as we are and as much as we have done for Jesus- why in the world would God want us to go through hard times?

And that is why I say to you that I am praying diligently that God would be good to His Church and His people to bring into our lives whatever it takes so that the people of the Church can get the same theology about God and Jesus as Satan has. Because our theology has made us fat, dumb, happy, and selfish, while his theology makes him tremble.

So what the devil was actually trying to do here was not only destroy Jesus- but destroy the Trinity by creating rebellion within the Trinity. Now please remember that the Father sent the Son into the world to humble Himself and to condescend. The Son comes and willingly sets aside the independent use of all of His Divine Powers. He is still fully God, He has not been diminished at all, He is still God, He is still God and Man at the same time in the same body- but He willingly *sets aside* the independent use of those Divine Powers, and Jesus fully yields to the Work of the Holy Spirit under the Will of the Father. This is what is called "The Humiliation of Jesus", or "The Condescension of Jesus". Jesus willfully sets aside the independent use of His Own Divinity so that He may humble Himself to the Will of His Father and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

And so Jesus functions as any man would function- even though He is the God/Man. He limits His Own use of the Deity and submits only to what the Spirit does under the Will of the Father.

So what Satan wants to do- is get Jesus to resist the Father's Plan and the Spirit's Power and grab personal satisfaction and act on His Own- thereby putting a breach in the Trinity which would throw the entire universe into chaos. So this is not some small thing happening here. This is not some normal temptation that you and I might fight against.

This is a battle directed right at the Essence of God Himself- not only of the Deity and the Perfections of the Person of Jesus Christ- but also of the unity of the Trinity Himself. The force of the temptation then was to rend the Trinity, to fracture the Trinity, and to create rebellion and disobedience and create a breach in the Godhead.

And praise God- Satan could not pull it off. And that's encouraging, isn't it? So this conflict was critical for the Messiah to prove His Deity, and as bad and hard as it was- all that it did was to forever prove the Deity of Jesus.

Now Jesus must be able to conquer Satan if He's God. He must be able to conquer temptation if He's God. And He certainly must be able to conquer sin and satan for Himself- if He's ever going to conquer sin and satan for us.

How in the world is Jesus ever going to rescue any sinner from sin and death and hell if He can't defeat satan Himself?

Well praise God- He can and He did! Jesus had to- in the words of **Hebrews 2:14,**

Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,

Jesus must demonstrate complete Power over satan- if He is going to deliver us from the penalty of sin. So Jesus had to fully conquer satan here in the wilderness. And He had to conquer him again at the Cross. And He had to conquer him again at the Tomb. And thanks be to God- Jesus is *still* conquering satan right this second by ever living to make intercession for us.

And we need to know that Jesus will conquer satan once again when He comes back to this earth and casts the devil and all of his demons along with all the ungodly into the Lake of Fire, and when He destroys the present universe and recreates a new one. So Jesus will conquer satan at every turn- and this is where He puts that power on display for the first time. So this is a very monumental part of Scripture.

Now I want to remind you of the "Preparation for this Battle" in **Luke 4:1&2:**

1 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness

2 for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry.

And we went over this a couple of weeks ago- but we need to thoroughly understand this so let's review it again. Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit and He returned from the Jordan where He had been baptized by John and was led by the Spirit to go into the wilderness for

40 days. And being tempted by the devil- Jesus ate nothing during those days. And when they had ended- Jesus became hungry.

Now in his account of this in **Mark 1:12**- John Mark uses a very interesting Greek word to describe this moment. Mark uses the Greek word "ek bello" to describe just *how* the Spirit led Jesus to go into the wilderness- and that word means: *expelled*.

So this is not some gentle soothing benign sweet leading here. No, the Holy Spirit *expelled* Jesus- He *drove* Jesus; He *compelled* Jesus to go into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

So we can see that God the Holy Spirit was *purposely* sending Jesus out into the wilderness. So this is not a situation where Jesus got Himself into a compromising position and then satan came after Him- like what happens to us- no, not at all. The Holy Spirit literally cast Jesus out; literally *expelled* Him into the wilderness. And **Mark 1:13** says,

in the wilderness... with the wild beasts

Now the second thing we looked at last time is the "Pattern of the Battle". Forty days of temptation very clearly were going on. And for 40 days it says, in verse 2, Jesus didn't eat. And after the 40 days- He became hungry. Now all of a sudden, Jesus has a physical need. For 40 days apparently He wasn't aware that He was hungry. For 40 days He was in this serious intense battle against satan and satan was hitting Him with all kinds of temptation- and Jesus defeated it all.

He was perfect. He was sinless all the way through it. But there's a new vulnerability now that satan perceives in his human side because Jesus now feels hunger. And so satan in his subtlety and his deception thinks that because there is now a hunger on the part of Jesus- that He can be seduced at this point in maybe ways that He couldn't be seduced before.

Now hunger is a real experience for a real man- and Jesus is a real man, and so satan is going to move in here to try to seduce Jesus into using His Divine Power inconsistent with His humiliation and full obedience to the Will of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

You see, for Jesus *not* to submit to the Spirit's leading here- for Jesus *not* to submit to the Father's Will- but for Him to operate outside of the Father's Will and operate outside of the Spirit's leading here and

to perform a miracle- which He could certainly do and turn those rocks into bread- would defeat everything that God is doing here.

And this is a principle that is not taught in Church anymore- but as God will help me- I will be faithful to teach you. The Bible teaches and the Life of Jesus teaches that it is more important to do God's Will than it is to eat. It is more important to obey the Spirit's leading than it is to live. It is more important for us to be found faithful and busy about the Work of the Lord than it is that we be found blessed or healthy or happy.

Life is not going to last forever anyway- dear friends, and we must remember that we are here on this earth to bring Glory and Honor to Jesus Christ- not to "be all we can be".

Jesus certainly had the Power to turn stones into bread here and He can do it if He wants to- just like He could have done something else at the Cross. The Bible says that if Jesus had wanted to- He could have called for ten legions of angels to get Him off the Cross and destroy those who were crucifying Him. But He didn't do that- not because He was not hurting- His agony was intense- but He didn't call for those angels because He loved His Father's Will more than He loved His Own Life. That is our example, brothers and sisters- not some prima donna peacock of a pastor who prances around bragging about what he owns.

So this is the time when Satan wants Jesus to act independently, and that's how you breach the Trinity; that's how you shatter the unity of the Trinity- you set the Son against the Father and against the Spirit.

The devil absolutely knows that Jesus is the Son of God- look down to **Luke 4:31**:

31 And He came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and He was teaching them on the Sabbath;

32 and they were amazed at His teaching, for His message was with authority.

33 In the synagogue there was a man possessed by the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice,

34 "Let us alone! What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!"

So we can see that satan never questioned Who Jesus was- he knew full bore Who Jesus was. So this temptation was not about Jesus having to prove Who He was.

The devil said to Jesus- *"Since You're the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread. What are You doing out here starving for anyway Jesus? You've waited 30 years; You've been humiliated for 30 years in Nazareth working in a carpenter's shop- even though You're God; 30 years You've been waiting- and all this time You've been a nobody and yet You're the ruler of the Universe, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. You're the eternal second person of the Trinity- and this is enough humiliation.*

And on top of that You've spent 40 days out here in the desert and You've gone through all of this, and now You are here and You're hungry and God has not even provided food for You and You're His Own Son? What's with that?

I mean God even fed those rebellious and disobedient Jews for 40 years in the wilderness- and God can't even get you a piece of bread? God fed people who complained and griped and all died in the wilderness and never entered the promised land because of their unbelief and here You are the perfect, sinless Son of God and God doesn't even feed You. Are You sure God really loves You? Are You sure God really trusts You? Are you sure that this is God's Will? If God was with You- wouldn't You at least have something to eat? Your must have missed God- because God wants you to enjoy life and live life to the fullest and You're hardly doing that out here in the wilderness starving to death!"

And that's the first category of temptation, to distrust God's Love. And that, you see, is his effort to drive that fracture into the Trinity to get the Son to stop trusting the Father's Love and the Father's Care and to stop being led by the Holy Spirit and to take matters into His Own Hands.

"Go on, Jesus- doubt God's Love; doubt God's Care; question whether You have heard correctly from God." Satan never asked Jesus to doubt His Sonship or even prove His Sonship but to doubt His Father's Love and His Father's care, to be fed up with the deprivation, fed up with humiliation, fed up with condescension that God had placed on Him, and to act independently of God and the Holy Spirit.

But, you know, it just didn't work. Jesus loved His Father so much that the more suffering Jesus went through, the more deprivation, the more condescension, the more humiliation He went through- the stronger He became and the more He loved His Father.

Hebrews 5:8 says,

8 Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.

9 And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

What a powerful statement! Although He was the Son of God- as a man- He suffered through those 30 years being tempted in all points like we are, as an infant, as a child, as a young man, as an adult, all that temptation. And then those 40 days in the wilderness- all of those temptations put together didn't break Him down. But through it all- Jesus learned obedience through the things that He suffered. He was a stronger man now than He had ever been.

Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God, and up until the age of twelve when He became fully aware of His mission as the Son of God and the Messiah and said He had to be in His Father's house doing His Father's work. And then as it grew and developed through the years of suffering in His humiliation and His condescension, His strength became greater and greater and greater because it was a life of unbroken and perfect obedience and it just made Him stronger and stronger and stronger.

So here He is at the age of 30, and when satan comes and said, *"Haven't You had enough humiliation?"* The fact of the matter is that the 30 years of humiliation and the 40 days of humiliation in the desert hadn't made Him weaker at all- they had made Him stronger.

Brothers and sisters- times of obedience, the hard times of deprivation taught Jesus to fully trust in God. And without ever internalizing the temptation- Jesus responds immediately in verse 4 and says, **"It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE.'"** He absolutely refuses to doubt God's Love and take matters into His Own Hand.

And so Jesus quotes from **Deuteronomy 8:3**- as I told you last week- and he says that a man doesn't live because he eats bread- but a man really lives because he obeys God and God will provide his bread. And that's the principle. *"I will trust God and God will let me live as long as God wants me to live. My life is in His Hands. I am under His control. I am under His power. I will not act independently of God because God's loving kindness is better than life itself!"* As Job said in **Job 13:15**

Though He slay me, I will hope in Him.

Remember- dear friends- the Jews who died in the wilderness didn't die because they didn't have any bread- because they had manna. No, they died in the wilderness because God left them there and wouldn't let them enter the promised land because they disbelieved. And Jesus is playing off of that right here. The implication of satan is *"God even fed those rebellious people and He won't even feed you? What kind of a deal is that?"*

But in His great Beauty- Jesus responds by saying, in effect, the people in the wilderness didn't die because they didn't have bread, they had bread. They died because they didn't love and have hope in God. You obey God and you'll live as long as God wants you to live- guaranteed. That's how you live. You live obediently, you seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness first- and what is the Promise of God to all those who do that? Everything else that you need gets added later.

Now it is true that satan had a small opportunity to rule as the king of this world for a very brief moment of time- but the only thing he rules over now is evil. It is God alone Who determines the boundaries of the nations, according to **The Acts 17**.

It is God alone Who causes nations to rise and fall.

It is God alone Who is the Creator and Owner of the Universe

It is God alone Who spoke and created Light

It is God alone Who flung the stars into space and Who turns the earth on its orbit

It is God alone Who carves the path of the rivers with his finger and Who draws a line in the sand commanding that the seas can come this far- but no further; Who built the foundations of the earth and Who touches the mountains and they smoke

It is God alone Who condescended down into human flesh and became Man and submitted Himself fully to the Father's Will and the Spirit's leading

It is God alone Who was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, and conquered satan, sin, death, hell and the grave, and Who rose on the third day, Who walked this earth after His Resurrection for 40 days, and Who bodily ascended into Heaven in the sight of over 500 people. It

is God alone Who sits on the Throne- reigning in majesty and Jesus sits at His Right Hand ever living to make intercession for us. And it is God alone who as Jesus will burst the clouds of Glory and return on a white Horse with the armies of heaven following after Him and will come back to this earth to rule the world with a rod of iron

And we need to love this God
And we need to fear this God
And we need to obey this God
And we need worship this God
And we need to serve this God

Let's come and pray

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.