

Session 5 John's Ministry and Jesus' Temptation (Lk. 3-4)

I. JOHN THE BAPTIST'S MINISTRY IN THE WILDERNESS (LK. 3:1-14)

- A. John's public ministry (Lk. 3:1-2) most likely began in the summer AD 26.

¹Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, ²while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. (Lk. 3:1-2)

Well, we are going to begin talking about the ministry of John the Baptist, because John the Baptist is identified as the Father's messenger about Jesus. In Matthew 11 he is called the Father's messenger. That is a pretty intense title. He was hand-picked by the Father who said, "I want you to introduce My Son to history so that they have the right ideas about Him." The reason I say that is because some people think of John the Baptist as a really intense and fiery prophet in the desert, and then we have kind, gentle Jesus. John the Baptist was hand-picked by the Father to introduce Jesus so that we would understand Jesus better. So to understand John the Baptist gives us insight into the Man that we love, the Lord Jesus.

It begins here in Luke 3. We are going to look at Luke 3-4. Again we will just have to go through it fairly quickly and just hit a few of the key points. There is a gold mine, of course, in all the Gospels. I could say that every session. So Luke began with dating the ministry of John the Baptist. One of the reasons Luke did this was that he wants to set salvation history—the big events of salvation—in context to world history.

What Luke was saying in essence was that this actually is world history, which follows the lead of salvation history. So in Luke 3:1, he said, "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar." That is the big date right there, the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar. This is one of the major insights to get the dating for Jesus' ministry, when He began His ministry, when He died, etc. Then he mentioned Pontius Pilate and Herod the tetrarch of Galilee.

1. ***Tiberius***: History teaches us that the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar was either in AD 27 or AD 29. Some see the first year of Tiberius's reign as beginning in AD 12 when he became co-regent with Caesar Augustus, while others see it in AD 14 when Augustus died.

Now concerning Tiberius, there are two dates that history gives for the fifteenth year of his reign. It would be AD 27 or AD 29. So either one of those dates is when John the Baptist's ministry began. Then Jesus' ministry began six months afterwards. I think the evidence lines up best for it being AD 27. I believe Jesus' ministry was launched in AD 27, and then He went to the cross in AD 30. I think that most of historians will back up those dates or be really close to that. I have a little bit of information on this here. I will have an entire handout on the dating of Jesus' ministry with four or five really clear and significant indicators that I will give to you at another time.

2. ***Pilate***: Pilate was governor (prefect) of Judea from AD 26-36 (Lk. 13:1; 23:1-56).
3. ***Herod Antipas***: ruled Galilee and Perea as tetrarch from 4 BC to AD 39. The title *tetrarch* means a "ruler of a fourth part." He was the son of Herod the Great and half-brother of Philip the tetrarch (a son of Herod the Great). Antipas imprisoned and executed John the Baptist.

Well, there are quite a few Herods in the Bible. There are several of them in the Bible and quite a few in history. This is Herod Antipas. This is not Herod the Great. This is Herod the Great's son, Herod Antipas. He was a tetrarch. A tetrarch means he ruled one-fourth of the area. His brother Philip and others, like Pontius Pilate, ruled the other parts of the area. His dad ruled the whole thing, but Herod Antipas only got a fourth of the kingdom when his father passed it on to him and his brothers. Now this Herod Antipas is the one who imprisoned and then executed John the Baptist.

4. **Annas and Caiaphas:** Caiaphas the actual high priest (AD 18-37) ruled with his father-in-law Annas who had been the high priest (AD 6-15). "High priest" was a lifetime title.

Then you will notice in verse 2, Annas and Caiaphas the high priest. The reason I highlight this is because you can be reading the Gospels and Acts and one time it says Annas is the high priest and the next time it is Caiaphas. You ask, "Which is it?"

Well, the official high priest was Caiaphas, but his father-in-law Annas was the high priest before him. When somebody was high priest, they had the title of high priest for life. The Romans took him out of office, but the Jewish leaders said, "You can take him out of office, but we are still going to treat him as a high priest." So Annas the father-in-law was still involved deeply along with Caiaphas his son-in-law. That is, there were, for all intents and purposes, two functioning high priests in the Gospels and in the book of Acts. That is just an FYI.

- B. John preached a baptism of repentance (Lk. 3:3-6). John described Jesus' ministry under the New Covenant—speaks of fullness and wholeness. A valley speaks of a low area and a mountain speaks of a high area. The gospel lifts us where we are lacking and lowers the mountains of pride or strongholds that dominate lives. There are many valley and mountains in individual lives, in society, and in creation.

³And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a **baptism of repentance for the remission of sins**, ⁴as it is written in...*Isaiah the prophet, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord...'*⁵*Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill brought low...'*⁶*and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'*" (Lk. 3:3-6)

1. **Baptism of repentance:** John's message was in agreement with the gospel that Jesus and the early church proclaimed. Faith and repentance are two aspects of committing our life to Jesus. Repentance is a *change of mind* that eventually leads to a change of behavior. Baptism is the outward sign of inward repentance. A change of perspective transforms our approach to life.
2. **Remission of sins:** Forgiveness is a most amazing gift, giving us a new beginning with confidence before God.
3. **Prepare the way for the Lord:** John's ministry consisted of preparing the Jews by getting their hearts right with God so when Messiah appeared they would be able to recognize Him.

Verse 3 says that John the Baptist "went to all the region around the Jordan River." That is down south, in the southern part of the Jordan River, just outside of Jerusalem. He was preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins or you could say, for the forgiveness of sins.

In verse 4 Luke wanted us to know—of course all four of the Gospels made this clear—that John the Baptist was a fulfillment—a partial fulfillment I will add, a partial fulfillment—of what Isaiah prophesied, that there would be a voice crying in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the Lord." That is the famous verse, Isaiah 40:3.

The promise was that every valley would be filled and every mountain would be brought low. Here is why we know that John the Baptist was only a partial fulfillment, because the context of verse 6 is the hour when all the nations see the glory of God. That happened only a little bit in John's day. Isaiah 40 is about the timeframe when all the nations see the glory of the Lord; it is in the generation of the Lord's return.

Though John the Baptist was the premiere forerunner at the first coming, God is going to raise up voices in the wilderness that are going to prepare the way of the Lord for the second coming in the hour in which all flesh—you could say all nations or all people groups—will see with their eyes the glory of the Lord. That is in those final years leading up to the Lord's return. Then the ultimate is the Lord's return and the glory of the Lord filling the earth.

Now what Isaiah was really doing was describing Jesus' new covenant ministry. When we see that "every valley shall be lifted up and every mountain brought low," that is symbolic. There is also a physical reality to that as well. It is symbolic for emotional and spiritual truths. John the Baptist was connected to that. This passage is also talking about topographical changes when the Lord returns on the earth. That is a big subject for another day. Many things are going to be shifted, even in geography.

In this hour this is a reference to the new covenant ministry of Jesus. All the valleys in our life, the low areas, are the areas where we are deficient in in the grace of God. Jesus by the Holy Spirit says, "I am going to help to bring those areas up." The mountains are the areas that are too intense, too out of balance. The emotions and the areas in our life that are way out of balance need to be brought down. The Holy Spirit is saying that "through Jesus I am going to do that. I am going to help you do that."

So John the Baptist was actually a forerunner to get people ready to receive the Man we love, the Man who would have that impact in our life. So I am believing the Lord for every area that is low and deficient in my spiritual life to be brought up. Every area that is like a mountain, that is over-exaggerated, that needs to be brought under the Holy Spirit's restraint, to be brought down, that mountain. The Scripture says that you can believe the Lord's leadership in your life for that to happen. So I want to encourage you to really lay hold of this. This is about Jesus. This is about His ministry.

Now John the Baptist's ministry was characterized as a baptism of repentance. Some folks have a wrong idea about repentance. They think John preached repentance, and then Jesus preached grace. Luke was very focused on and emphasized the subject of repentance. Luke wrote the Gospel of Luke. Most of you know Luke wrote the book of Acts. He wrote both of those. You study the word "repentance" throughout Luke and the book of Acts. Luke will show you how John preached it and how Jesus preached it more than John did. Then the apostles preached it even more than Jesus because their ministry was longer. Repentance is the message that Jesus, the early Church, and John the Baptist proclaimed.

So John was not doing some kind of weird thing until Jesus came around with the grace of God. I hear things like that. Faith and repentance are actually two sides of one reality. I really want you to get that. Faith and repentance is really two sides of one reality. Now repentance really means change your mind. It is not just change your values from sinful things to godly—that is repentance, too—but change your perspective, your mindset, your perspective of life, the lens through which you view life and situation. John was saying to repent and see it through God's eyes. We call that faith. Faith and repentance really are two sides of one coin in reality. One of the reasons John the Baptist emphasized repentance—and Jesus emphasized it as did the apostles—was because John understood that transformation is released in our life only by repentance changing our values, changing our perspective and our mindset, the way we view things, changing the leadership of our life from ourselves to the Lord. So we do not want to be shy or draw back on the subject of repentance.

Now he preached a baptism of repentance, meaning baptism where you went down in the water and you came up, signifying that the old life was going down and being washed away, and "I am now committed to a new life."

It does not mean everything is going to be easy from then on. It is a statement of commitment. You are coming up out of the water saying, "I want from now on to be under a new leadership, to embrace new values, and to have a new perspective on how I view life and opportunities and challenges. I am going to view them through the lens of the grace of God through Jesus' leadership."

Now the problem was that some people in that day were getting baptized and doing the outward part, but they were not doing the inward. I know people today who think, "Well, I have been baptized, and you know that is good enough." I say that you can have a wedding ring, but if you do not have a spouse it is not going to get you very far. Baptism without a relationship is like the symbol without the reality.

Now this very glorious statement in verse 3: it is a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. We are so used to that idea. This is awesome, that your sins are totally forgiven. I mean this is amazing! You can have a new beginning every single day in the grace of God, no condemnation, having confidence before God even in your weakness. That is what the remission of sins is talking about. This is the most glorious news: full forgiveness, final forgiveness, complete forgiveness, confidence with God, and not just when we get to heaven! There is no condemnation in Christ.

John the Baptist was saying, "Guys, you know this Man I am talking about, the One who is coming? He is going to bring this to your life." This is more glorious than we can really, really grasp. John the Baptist was emphasizing this and tying it to the subject of repentance and gaining a new perspective on life.

II. THE PREACHING OF JOHN: THE CALL TO REPENTANCE (LK. 3:7-14)

- A. Many in Israel trusted in their religious heritage, saying, "Abraham is our father." Today, some trust in their church background or their parent's faith instead of having a relationship with Jesus.

⁸Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father"...¹⁰So the people asked him, saying, "What shall we do then?"¹¹He answered and said to them, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise."¹²Then tax collectors...said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?"¹³And he said to them, "Collect no more than what is appointed for you."¹⁴Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages." (Lk. 3:7-14)

We are going to look for a moment at the preaching of John. Again, John is preparing people for Jesus' leadership. John is preparing people to understand what kind of leader Jesus is. Well, John starts off here in verse 8. He says, "Bear fruits worthy of repentance." That is, don't just have "repentance language." Don't do the repentance ceremony—baptism—without repenting. He was saying that if you do not change your values and your mindset about life—your perspective—if you do not change leadership over your life from you to the Lord, then nothing is going to change. Nothing good that God promised is going to happen in the way the Word of God describes it.

He went on, "And do not say to yourself 'We have Abraham as our father.'" You see, the Jewish people thought that since Abraham was their forefather, therefore they were right with God, merely because he was their great-great-great many-times-great grandfather. Abraham was 2,000 years before Christ. They thought because they

were connected to him by blood they were good. John said, "No, no! Your religious heritage is not a substitute for a real relationship with the Messiah."

So John was telling them not to trust their religious upbringing and religious heritage. I know people today who trust their church background. They say, "Well, I was raised in the church...I was homeschooled...I was in the youth group...I did this." Now they are in their college years or in their early twenties, and they are out and about doing things. They are thinking, "Well, I grew up with that, so check, I got that one settled." They are trusting their heritage. That is, they are "trusting Abraham" in essence. They trust their parent's faith. They think things like, "I am good friends with the pastor back home," or "I was in the youth group."

What John was saying here was, "No, that is not what I am talking about. Do not lean on that, but have a genuine up-to-date relationship with the King of Israel, the King of the nations, Himself."

So in verse 10 the people asked, "Well, what does that look like?" It is interesting there was three different groups that asked John the Baptist, "What does this look like?" I am a little bit amazed by the answer. Every answer he gave was an economics answer. It was about the way they stewarded money. That was not the whole answer, but that was the main answer, every one of them.

I would have thought, "Wow, how about pride or whatever? Their lust in other areas?" But it was about money. There is something about when the Lord has leadership over our money that it touches the deep places in our heart.

It is like John was saying, "You just obey the Lord's leadership in money and you will see how many issues in your heart will come to the surface—good ones and bad ones—and what will happen in your spiritual life if you stay obedient in the realm of money." Obeying the Lord in money and entering into the fullness of God in your life are connected. In all the years I have been pastoring I have seen that when people will not obey the Lord in the realm of money they are stuck in their spiritual life in a way. Bitterness and money are the two things where I see more people stuck spiritually, because they assume those two areas are already settled in their life only because they are doing better than the guy next to them. These are really essential areas.

In verse 11, he said, "The guy who has two coats, give one to the guy who has none. The guy who has food, do likewise." Now I have never really met an American, except for on a mission trip, who had two coats and who really gave one of their coats away. You know I have heard that people do it on a mission trip; on that one outreach they will do it. That does not really cross our mind really. You know you think, "Well, I have five coats. I have six coats. I have way more than two." I don't know how many coats I really have; my wife knows, but I don't. I have a bunch of them, I am sure, in a closet somewhere. We never really think about this. John was saying that God says to us, "I really actually want you to talk to Me about these kind of small areas of your life."

Then in verse 12, he spoke to the tax collectors. Now for tax collectors you could think the IRS guys. The tax collectors were the people who collected the money. They were not merely government employees, though they were government employees. They truly were the IRS of their day. This could also be anyone who is in a position that determines what people owe, such as rental property managers. Or it could be bookkeepers, store clerks, accountants. There are any number of professions where the guy who is making the decision can kind of be dishonest on ten percent, pocket it, and nobody will know. John was saying, "If you are in one of those positions, do not take more than is righteous." Nobody is watching, nobody is ever going to catch you, but it will matter in your life with God.

Then verse 14, he spoke to the soldiers. The soldiers of that day were what we would call law enforcement, the many types of law enforcement of today. It does not only have to be government law enforcement. It might be

anybody in a position of authority who can make a decision that can harm somebody else's future or hinder someone else's future. John was saying, in effect, "If you are in a position of authority to open and shut doors for people for good or bad, do not use that position of authority to intimidate them. Do not say, 'Hey, if you do not do it my way, I will make sure that life is a little rough on you.'" It is not just intimidation; also do not falsely accuse. The idea was that the soldiers would accuse a guy to get a bribe from another guy. So do not shift the story so you can get an advantage later from the person you helped by shifting the story a little bit. Do not do that in your leadership position, but be content with your wages. Now the reason this was a big deal was because the soldiers did not make very much. So it was very easy to bribe a little bit or to take ten percent more because nobody could catch them.

- B. **Repentance:** Repentance is a change of mind that eventually leads to a change of behavior. Outward change is the evidence of repentance. Sincere repentance eventually results a changed life.
- C. True faith involves social concern for the needy. John called them to generously share their possessions with the needy. John did not call them to follow his desert lifestyle.

So John was saying that the realm of money really is related to responding to Jesus' leadership, because John was preparing people for Jesus. Again, those two areas, those two issues—money and bitterness—are areas you cannot touch much because you cannot really get onto the inside of somebody's heart as those are subjective areas. I mean, who really knows if you are bitter or you are covetous? If we really want the fullness of God, if we really want the valleys lifted up in our life and the mountains, those difficult areas, brought down, then we want to take these cues from John about how to respond to Jesus.

III. THE PREACHING OF JOHN: THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS (LK. 3:15-20)

- A. John spoke of Jesus as the coming Messiah (Mt. 3:11-12; Mk. 1:7-8; Lk. 3:15-18).

¹⁶John answered..., "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." ¹⁷His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire." (Lk. 3:16-17)

Now John is going to speak about Jesus Himself. This is a pretty interesting description of the Messiah. I do not think you and I preach Jesus like John did. I mean, I have never heard much talk about this, maybe a little bit, here and there. I look at this and I think, "Lord, this is good that we are going through this class because this is how the great forerunner—the Father's messenger Matthew 11 calls him—prepared people about Jesus.

Verse 16, he said, "I baptize you in water, but the Man who coming is mightier than I." Okay, that is good. He is far more powerful. I think we all buy that. He is far more powerful than anybody. He went on, "He is the Man who will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

Not only does He, number one, baptize you with Holy Spirit and fire, He also has a winnowing fan in His hand. That is His leadership. John was saying, "I want to tell you what He is like. He has a winnowing fan in His hand. He is preparing to use it when He comes into His public ministry." What He is going to do with that winnowing fan is He is going to thoroughly cleanse the threshing floor. When He cleanses the threshing floor—you know right outside the barn is the threshing floor—He is going to gather the wheat. That is, He is going to mobilize the wheat and gather it and take care of it, and He is going to burn the chaff. I have never heard anybody preach a developed message on this description of Jesus. I mean I need to get with it. Get with it, Mike! Okay.

- B. **He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire:** Fire refers to a blessing of the purifying work of the Spirit and of His judgment on rebellion. This gives revelation into who God is.

“He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and with fire.” Now fire refers to the purifying work of the Holy Spirit so that love is imparted to us. The purifying work is about an impartation of love, the revelation and impartation of love. Fire is also means judgment. So Jesus uses fire in both the positive and the negative sense. This gives us revelation of who He is, of what He is really like.

Of course when we receive Jesus we want greater encounters with the Holy Spirit. I do not think being baptized with the Holy Spirit is just a one-time experience where the Holy Spirit touches you when you are first saved or you receive the gift of tongues. When I think of being baptized in the Holy Spirit, the word “baptized” is “immersed,” so we want to be baptized in the Holy Spirit again and again. The phrase used throughout the book of Acts and Epistles is “being filled with the Spirit,” being renewed and refreshed in the Holy Spirit, being baptized, immersed in the Spirit, where this is the world we want to live in and have encounter with the Holy Spirit. John is saying, in essence, “Jesus will lead you into encounter with the Holy Spirit more than you can imagine if you will stay with it.”

So do not be content if you speak in tongues or that you are born again. More than that, we want that immersion. It is not just a one-time experience we are talking about. We want to connect with the Man who has the authority to release greater encounters of the Spirit. These encounters have fire dimensions that are purifying with the impartation of love. There is going to be trouble in the nations when the fire of the Lord in the “negative” sense confronts sin, but that is the Jesus we love. He is the One who releases the fire, both the good and the negative dimensions of the fire of God.

- C. **Winnowing fork:** A forklike shovel was used to throw grain and chaff (husk and straw) into the air. The wind carried the chaff away from the heavier grain which then fell to the ground.

He has a winnowing fork in His hand. That is an interesting description. Now that was an agricultural culture so they understood a winnowing fork. It is a fork-like shovel. They would take the big winnowing fork and would pick the grain up with the fork and throw it in the air as the wind blew. The wind would blow the chaff away because it is lighter, and the grain which is heavier would fall to the ground. That is how it got separated.

What John was saying with this phrase was that Jesus is going to separate what is going on in the nations. He is going to cause people to decide for Him and against Him. He is going to bring a separation. In Matthew 10:34 He said that about Himself. He said, “Do not think I came to bring peace.” Actually He did, and He knew He did, but that was not the whole story of why He came. He said, “First I am going to bring division.” That is, “I am going to intervene in lives and I am going to intervene in the nations in a way where it is going to cause the wheat to be separated from the chaff.”

Again when the farmer threw it up in the air and then the wind blew, the chaff blew away. It was lighter, and the wheat would fall to the ground. The point John was making is that this Man who is about to come on the world scene is a Man who is going to separate the wheat from the chaff. That is one of His primary things. Now again we do not think about Jesus that way that much, but this is how He was introduced into human history.

- D. **Many other words (3:18):** John exhorted the people and preached the good news to them. The message of repentance is “good news,” for it means that people can be forgiven and know God. Preaching combines the good news of the kingdom with exposing sin that hinders the kingdom.

- E. In past generations, some preachers only emphasized sin and judgment without the good news. Today the problem is opposite—some only emphasize good news without calling for repentance.

Now in past generations, a lot of preachers spoke about judgment and sin and repentance, but they did not talk that much about the good news. There was a correction that needed to take place in the past generations. Today it is quite opposite. A lot of folks talk about the good news—I mean forgiveness and glorious things in our life which is our focus—but they do not ever talk about repentance, the need to really take seriously the mandate to break our agreement with wrong thinking and wrong values and the wrong leadership in our life.

That is what repentance is. We break our agreement with wrong values. We call sin sin. We break our agreement with wrong ideas so we can walk in faith, because right ideas are seeing things like God sees them and agreeing with Him, not stuck in a negative mindset, but saying what God says, getting it into our mouth and getting it into our language with God and breaking our agreement with the wrong leadership over our life. We are not just following the crowd or following our impulses and desires. We are following a Man who is leading us by the Holy Spirit.

I believe before the Lord returns He is going to raise up forerunners in that generation so that all the nations will see the salvation of God. That is what Isaiah 40 said, the passage we started with. There will be voices crying out. They will not just be echoes repeating something someone else said. It will resonant in their spirit. They will be voices. They will call people to repentance, to agree with God's mindset. We call that faith, but it is really faith and repentance, which are two sides of the same coin. They are going to call people to the glory of Jesus' leadership.

- F. John rebuked Herod Antipas for his sin. This led to John's imprisonment and execution (9:7-20). John's ministry lasted for a year or so, perhaps 18 months (26-27 AD), overlapping with Jesus for six months or so. It is estimated that he was in prison for about one year being executed in 29 AD.

¹⁹But **Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils** ²⁰...above all, that he **shut John up in prison.** (Lk. 3:19-20)

IV. JESUS BAPTIZED BY JOHN IN PEREA (LK. 3:21-22)

- A. Jesus was baptized by John (Mt. 3:13-17; Mk. 1:9-11; Lk. 3:21-22) probably in autumn AD 26. At His baptism, Jesus received the anointing of the Spirit and God's audible affirmation over His life. With this supernatural, divine endorsement, Jesus was ready to begin His ministry.

²¹...it came to pass that **Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened.**

²²**And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."** (Lk. 3:21-22)

It says in verse 21, that "it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized." I think this was the highlight of John's ministry. He baptized Jesus. I mean this is like so glorious! You know he was called to get people to agree with Jesus. I do not think anything was a greater highlight in terms of a ministry event than this one thing right here.

So verse 21, he baptized Jesus. While Jesus was praying, the heavens opened. What a remarkable thing! The heavens opened and two things happened. First, the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in bodily form like a dove. This is so intense, it's like what? What do you mean? Well, I think it means He descended on Jesus like a dove. So the Holy Spirit came on Jesus in a way that other people could see evidence of it.

Now Jesus is fully God so He has all the fullness of God in Him. As a Man He still needed to be anointed to function as an anointed Man because Jesus did not walk on the earth drawing on His own deity. He walked on the earth in the limitations of humanity drawing on the anointing of the Spirit that was on His life.

I believe the whole time Jesus was saying something like, "Father, I could draw on my own deity and do it all, but then I would not be a representative for the human race. I have to live in the limitations of humanity in every way. I have to be tempted in every way, and I have to draw on the anointing of the Spirit through my communion with you, my prayer life, and my interaction regularly with You, God. That is what I have to draw on to move in power." So that anointing came on Him at His baptism.

That is not all. Second, the Father spoke audibly over Him. He did not merely say, "This is the Man I have chosen." He said, "You are My Beloved Son. You are My Son." I mean He did not talk to the crowd about Jesus. He talked to Jesus about Jesus, and the crowd just observed it.

This is the most dramatic, glorious thing I could imagine: that Jesus' childhood and His young adult years through His teens and twenties—because He is thirty years old right now—are summed up by this one sentence, "In You I am well pleased." We get more insight into what Jesus was like as a teenager and a young adult by this one sentence. We do not get much insight into His earlier life. It was obscured; it is not in the Word of God besides that one passage when He was twelve years old and went to the temple. Here we see the whole story right here, "In You I am well pleased."

So Jesus was baptized, and the power of the Spirit rested on Him to anoint Him as the Messiah. This was a new thing. The anointing came on Him as a Man, as the Messiah, an anointing He did not have as a Man before this happened. Then the voice of God, in His ordination service so to speak, affirmed Him, "You are My beloved. I am so pleased in You." Of course that is the truth that Jesus lived out of. That was His identity when He was being rejected by men and even His own team betrayed Him and fled when they were under pressure. He lived out of the resource of knowing that God said, "You are My beloved. I am Your Father." He lived out of the resource of the Father saying, "I delight in Your choices. I believe in Your choices. The nations do not, but I do."

You know, when He went to Nazareth, His hometown, they wanted to kill Him, for real, I mean His long-term friends. I mean the whole youth group, all the elders of the church, all the leaders of the town. They wanted to kill Him, for real. Mary's heart was broken. I mean these were real friends who were really against Him now, suddenly, because He was making these big bold statements. When He would retreat, Jesus could say, "But Father, You delight in Me and I am Your beloved and that is good enough for Me. I can endure all of this if I have that." This is not just a truth to observe about His life; it is a truth to imitate as well.

- B. **My Beloved Son:** The Father summed Jesus' childhood and young adult years with one statement. This is the greatest insight we have into 30 years of Jesus' life about which we know very little.
- C. **Holy Spirit descended on Him:** Jesus, as a Man, was anointed for ministry.
- D. **Like a dove:** This seems to have been a theophany—God appearing in "bodily form."
- E. John agreed to baptize Jesus after Jesus declared it was necessary to "fulfill all righteousness."

¹⁴John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?"

¹⁵But Jesus answered... "Permit it...for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness."
(Mt. 3:14-15)

Well, Luke did not mention this, but Matthew and Mark made the statement that John said, "Hey, I cannot baptize You."

Jesus said, "Yeah, you have to."

John said, No, no, no, no, no, no, no! No way! I cannot do this. It is not right."

Jesus, in Matthew 3:15, made this very unusual and surprising statement. He said, "You have to permit it because it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." So in what sense was righteousness fulfilled when Jesus was baptized? I mean it was not in the sense that Jesus was repenting. There was no repentance going on.

I have five paragraphs here that give a little bit about this. I do not want to take time on it right now. I just want to point that out to you because I remember when I read this years ago, I thought, "This is strange. How did it fulfill righteousness? I mean we have a man who never sinned. What sense does righteousness need to be fulfilled?" It was in the sense that God's will and God's ways were completed. You can read these five paragraphs on your own if it grabs your attention. I do not want to take time on it right now, but I did not want to skip that point in terms of the notes.

1. Jesus' baptism was an acceptance of His Messianic responsibilities—He was making a complete break with His past life to fully embrace a new life as Messiah. The baptism was a type of consecration to God's priestly call over His life. The priests under Moses were consecrated by being washed with water (Ex. 29:4; Lev. 8:6).
2. Jesus submitted to baptism as a symbolic anticipation of his death (Lk 12:50; Mk. 10:38-39).
3. Jesus' baptism paralleled Israel crossing the Red Sea after the Exodus. Jesus crossed the Jordan to enter the wilderness to be tested; Israel crossed the Red Sea to enter the wilderness to be tested. Jesus is our greater Moses leading God's people into the promised land.
4. By His baptism Jesus endorsed John's ministry as being approved by God.
5. In baptism Jesus identified with those of Israel who were expressing their obedience to God.

V. JESUS' TEMPTATION (LK. 4:1-13)

- A. Jesus' temptation in the wilderness (Mt. 4:1-11; Mk. 1:12-13; Lk. 4:1-13) in autumn AD 26

¹Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, ²being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry. (Lk. 4:1-2)

We are moving now past the baptism, the anointing of the Spirit, the audible voice of God, all of these things taking place. The next thing that happened was that Jesus was led into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit to be tempted by the devil. Now that is an interesting paradox: led by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil. Like, "Okay, I thought the Spirit was supposed to lead me away from temptation." This is a very unusual situation here. We know that God never tempts us, but He tests us.

So the Holy Spirit was leading Jesus into the most dramatic testing of a man ever in human history. The Holy Spirit empowered Him. He had the affirmation of the Father's love to empower His heart and the Spirit to empower Him. He walked into the most dramatic testing that any man has ever walked into. If Jesus had failed

in this test, then He would not have been qualified to be our high priest to save us. There was no other Savior. The Father cannot become the Son, and the Spirit cannot become the Son. This was the only one opportunity. There is not another member of the Trinity up there that was going to come down as a Man.

Jesus came down and was led into the wilderness. Here is the part I want you to see. That is why I wanted to go past some of the other areas so quickly because I want you to grasp this point. This was the most dramatic moment in history before the cross, right here. Here this Man Jesus is going to stand before the devil in the place that Adam stood. The Bible calls Adam "the first Adam," and he fell under the temptations in the garden of Eden. Jesus is called "the last Adam." There is no third Adam. He is the last Adam. He is the only option for the human race. And He was going to be in the very grips of the most intense, horrific temptation. Every single element of power the demons can put against a man was going to hit him in the wilderness.

Well, Adam had his test in the garden of Eden, in paradise. But the Father said, "Well, here is how we are going to do this with the last Adam. We are not going to put Him in paradise. We are going to lead Him to the wilderness, to the most difficult situation, with no advantage whatsoever in the natural. We are going to bring Him through forty days of fasting so that He is so wearied and vulnerable in His humanity." The devil came, yet Jesus had the anointing of the Spirit and the affirmation of the Father. That is what He had in His humanity to stand against the Spirit. He had the Word of God to speak against the devil. This is such a historic moment. I want you to grasp the weightiness of it, of this historic moment.

I also want you to grasp this as a model because it is not just a historic moment that we observe with wonder, awe, and gratitude. Remember, if He would have failed, there was no third Adam. That was it. There would be no salvation for the human race if He failed. So we look at this passage with admiration and awe and gratitude. We also look at the passage to see a model, because under the greatest intensity of temptation, He had interaction with the Spirit, He had the Father's voice of affirmation, and He had the Word of God in His mouth. Those were the three things that He drew on to overcome the devil, and that is a model for us.

- B. **Led by the Spirit:** This conflict was initiated by the Spirit, not Satan. God tests, but does not tempt anyone (James 1:3; cf. Ex. 16:4; 20:20; Deut. 8:2; 13:2; Judg. 2:22; 3:4; 2 Chr. 32:31).

So let's look at this in Luke 4:1, "and Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River." Now He is led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted for forty days. Now He was not only tempted three times, but He was tempted night and day for forty days. I mean the enemy was barraging Him with every single tactic and every single horrific thing he could bring against Him in His humanity.

Remember Jesus did not draw on His own deity. He had to live in the limitations of a Man and draw on the anointing, draw on the affirmation of the Father, and speak the Word of God. Those were His weapons that He was going to fight with. He was not in Eden in paradise like Adam; He was in the wilderness. He was not full of vigor. He was fasting on water for forty days, and He was getting weaker and weaker. When you are weaker in your frame, you are more vulnerable.

The Father said, "This is still going to work." I mean everything was on the line for this one six-week period. All of human history was on the line right then in this six-week period, in these forty days. So we have this intensity in what was going on these six weeks, and then three years later we have the six hours on the cross. In those two time frames this whole thing in human history comes together.

Now the Spirit led this confrontation with darkness, and it was an historic moment in history when Jesus was standing before God and Satan as the second Adam because the first Adam had failed and all of history was scarred and injured by that failure. With this new level of warfare, there were going to be new breakthroughs. One breakthrough is that He qualified as a Man, He was completely victorious so He qualified as a sinless Man

who had been through every testing that any other person has. Every one of them hit Him in full force, and He obeyed God. Therefore, He was now qualified as the innocent one to take our place, to take the place of the guilty ones, so that the guilty ones—you and I—can become innocent before God as a free gift.

- C. Jesus spoke God's Word to Satan— All three scriptural quotations come from Deuteronomy when Israel was being tested in the wilderness for 40 years (Deut. 8:3; 6:13, 16).

Most of you are a little bit familiar with this passage, Luke 4. If you are not, well, it is pretty easy to grasp the main things that are taking place in Luke 4. There are three basic temptations that are highlighted. Remember He was being tested the whole forty nights and days. There are three of them that the Spirit brought to attention to be recorded in the Word of God.

It is interesting that Jesus spoke the Word of God every time in response to all three of the temptations. There was not a time that He did not speak the Word back. This is where the model comes, meaning seeing His temptation and how He overcame as a model for us. It is not just something we marvel at with worship, but it is also a model for us to imitate. A lot of believers just do not do this. When the enemy comes against them, they kind of grit their teeth, they kind of hunker down, and they think, "Uh, I am getting hurt. I just hurt. Uh, okay." No! Lift your voice, talk to the devil, and speak the Word of God. Declare who you are; declare your authority in Christ. Do not just "Ugh. Uh. Ugh," die. I mean I understand pain is real, but it is not an hour where you want pain to be the final word of your response. We have to speak the Word of God back. Jesus did it every time.

The Word of God teaches us to do that. We speak the Word of promise, who we are, our authority in Christ. "Devil, be gone in the name of Jesus." Though we have to do it a thousand times in a day, we do it a thousand times. We live by the Word of God. The way we live by it is that we bring it back through our heart and mind with our lips. By our mouth, by our lips, we do that. We speak the Word of God, and it reengages our heart and our mind in agreement with God. That is how we live by the Word of God.

If we do not reengage our heart and our mind by speaking the Word, the enemy will speak his word over us. I tell you, the enemy knows the Bible really well, and he knows you really well; he knows how to deceive you really easily. If you are going to be in the mood of "I am just going to hang out for this one and just feel sorry for myself, and get a few friends to pat me on the back and say how rough my life is..." well, I am all for a little bit of that, but, beloved, that cannot be the final word. It cannot be the main conversation that goes on.

I am all for sympathy and compassion, but I am also one to say, "Hey, I will stand with you, and let's see the truth of what is going on here."

Well, it is not just that Jesus quoted the Bible three times, but all three times He quoted from the book of Deuteronomy. That is significant. The reason it is significant is because Deuteronomy is a book which described Israel in the wilderness forty years. So Jesus was saying, "I am in the wilderness for forty days as Israel was in the wilderness for forty years. Adam was in the garden of Eden being tempted; I am in the desert being tempted." So He stands in contrast both to Adam in the garden and Israel in the wilderness. He was saying, "I am going to bring both of those together and have victory and show you who I am before God in this intense six-week, forty-day period."

1. Jesus was victorious in the wilderness in contrast to the failures of Adam in the garden of Eden and Israel in the wilderness. All three— Jesus, Adam, and Israel—were referred to as "God's son" (Ex. 4:22-23; Hos. 11:1; Lk. 3:23, 38).

So I say this again: Jesus is victorious in contrast to Adam in the garden because He is the second, final Adam and in contrast to Israel in the wilderness because He is the new Israel. That is, He is the embodiment of what God wants in Israel. He is saying, "Israel, look at Me and see your destiny. See your source. See your future by looking at Me." So it is not surprising that all three—Jesus, Adam, and Israel—were called the "Son of God." Even of corporate Israel God said, "This is My Son." He said it about Adam, and He said it about Jesus. Those three are designated this in a more specific way in the Scripture.

2. Jesus answered the temptation by being armed with the "sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17).

Jesus answered the enemy by the sword of the Spirit. Remember what Paul said, that you can quench all the flaming missiles of the evil one by the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. It is the Word of God in your mouth because, when you speak the Word of God, it brings your mind and your emotions into alignment or agreement with what God says. If you do not speak it, your mind and emotions go right and left, up and down, and all kinds of directions.

D. The purpose of Satan's temptation was to get Jesus to do something independent of the Father. By doing this, Jesus would be disqualified to save us as our human high priest (Heb. 2:17).

¹⁹Jesus answered... "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner." (Jn. 5:19)

Now I want you to really grasp what was going on, the historic intensity of what was going on. Understand that the purpose of Satan in tempting Jesus was more than trying to get Jesus to sin. It was more than that. He was trying to get Jesus to act independently of God. He was trying to get Jesus to draw on His own deity and not stay under the limitations of humanity drawing on the Holy Spirit. Because if one time Jesus acted as God instead of a weak man drawing on the Spirit, then Satan could say, "You cannot save man unless You live perfectly one hundred percent as Man every time." So here He was in the weakest condition physically. We understand what Satan was really after; he was trying to get Jesus to move independently of the Father, not trusting the Father like the rest of the redeemed have to or waiting on the Father. He was trying to speed things up and get Jesus to step outside of that limitation.

Jesus, of course, understood it far better than Satan did. Jesus said in John 15, "I say to you I can do nothing of Myself, but only what I see the Father do. "Now there are a number of points about that, but one thing Jesus is saying is "I cannot do anything of Myself, but only of the Father." In other words, "If I step out of the limitations of humanity and I move in My own power here"—because He is God—"if I draw on My own deity, then I cannot be your Savior. I have to live as a Man one hundred percent of the time, and I have to be obedient one hundred of the time in order to qualify to offer Myself for your salvation."

I have heard guys on talk shows say stuff like, "You know you are kind of elitist in your religion. You think you are the best." It is not about being elite or the best. We are the only religion that has a Man who faced everything and never sinned, and then took the sin on Himself. It is an issue of justice. It is an issue of "Is there any other faith that has a man who did that?" Because if they do, then we can talk. Of course there is no such thing.

E. The three temptations represent the three categories of temptations that all people face (1 Jn. 2:16): the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life—sensuality, greed, and pride.

¹⁶For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. (1 Jn. 2:16)

Okay, I want you to notice—and you are going to have to put some of this together on your own; I am just tipping you off because we will not have time to really develop it—there are three main categories of sin in life. I mean there are millions of temptations, but there are three main categories; every temptation can fall under one of the three.

I John 2:16 says there is the lust of the flesh; that is our flesh being gratified in fleshly pleasures. There is the lust of the eyes: we see something and want it. There is the pride of life. Three main categories of sin, every human being faces them. What I am going to show you is that Adam faced these exact three sins in the garden of Eden and fell, and Jesus was going to face these same three in the wilderness and He was going to succeed. He was standing right where Adam stood in the same three temptations, although remember Satan had been tempting Him the whole forty days. These are the three the Holy Spirit brought to our attention at the climax. They were climatic, I am sure, even in the experience of Jesus.

1. **Lust of flesh:** pleasure without reference to the will of God—“sensuality”

The lust of the flesh speaks of pleasures without reference to the will of God. I am calling that sensuality. Sensuality does not just mean sexuality. Sensuality is a realm of physical pleasure, and it is not just sexual in nature. This is the lust of the flesh.

2. **Lust of eyes:** possessions without reference to the will of God—“greed”

Then there is the lust of the eyes; that is possessions without reference to the will of God.

3. **Pride of life:** position without reference to the will of God—“pride”

Then the pride of life is position without reference to the will of God. I heard some preacher say that many years ago. I thought, “Man, I am going to take that and run.” I have heard a number of guys say that, too.

So these are not only evil pleasures, but they are also any pleasures out of the will of God.

In this case Satan wanted Him to turn stone into bread because Jesus was really hungry. There is nothing sinful about wanting bread. There is nothing sinful about that at all. God made manna in the wilderness for forty years, every single day. So God does make food out of nothing. He does it all the time. Jesus multiplied food. So Jesus knew it was in His repertoire, so speak, to be able to do that.

But the Father was saying, “Jesus, You cannot do it without Me telling You to do it. It is in My character to do it, but until I say do it, You cannot do it. You have to live under the limitation of Your humanity one hundred percent.”

Satan said, “Hey, You are hungry. Make bread. Come on, it is biblical. It is in the Bible; just make it. You can do it.”

Jesus said, “Absolutely not.” I am categorizing this temptation as the lust of the flesh. It was not sexual, but it was a gratification issue—a legitimate one, but He had to step out of the boundaries of His limitations as a Man to do it. He said, “I am not doing it.”

Even with Israel, the Father said, “I will give you food when I give it. You have to trust My leadership.”

So Jesus was here forty days, hungry, saying, “Father, I am trusting Your leadership.”

The Father said, “I will give it to You when the timing is perfectly right. Trust Me and do not move on Your own, no matter what Satan does.” So Jesus turned that away; that was what He was doing.

- F. Sensuality, greed, and pride were the three sins that Adam and Eve were tempted with in the garden (Gen 3:5-6).

⁵“**God knows that in the day you eat of it...you will be like God [pride]...**” ⁶“**So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food [pleasurable—lust of the flesh], that it was pleasant to the eyes [lust of eyes]...she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.** (Gen. 3:5–6)

You can read this verse and look at it a little bit later, but here I just make it really simple: sensuality, pride, and greed. That is a little over-simplistic, but it puts it real tightly in your understanding. Almost everything you deal with, as far as I am concerned, every temptation you and I deal with will be in one of those categories. Here in Genesis 3 I have identified them very quickly. If I had more time, I would develop why all three were represented in the temptation that Adam faced.

- G. **Principle:** Although Jesus was never less than God, He lived on the earth as though He was never more than a man. He always possessed the fullness of deity, yet lived on earth dependent on God by the activity of the Spirit as we are. He had to live totally as a man to be a sacrifice for man's sin.

*Here is the principle that Jesus lived in. I heard a preacher say this many years ago too, that although Jesus was never less than God—never, there was never a moment when He was less than God—yet He lived on the earth **as though** He was never more than a Man. Now this is the glorious thing about His temptation and why we should marvel at what He was facing. In His thirty-three years on the earth He lived always in the limitations of His humanity and drew on the Spirit in the Father's timing. When the Father did not give it, He said, “I cannot do it.” He lived completely like He was a man. Though He was never ever less than God, He lived as though He was never more than a man. I would say in those last three-and-a-half years as a Man anointed by the Spirit. He gives us a picture of what a man anointed by the Spirit lives like. Of course He is the ideal beyond measure, without measure.*

- H. Jesus stood in the same position that the first Adam facing the same three temptations. Everything Jesus did, He did as a man. He demonstrated how people are to relate to the Father.
- I. **Illustration:** A laptop can be powered by a battery or a plug-in. Jesus had the batteries—His deity; but He always lived by the plug in—the anointing on the Spirit on Him. He never used the batteries.

Here is an illustration I heard years ago. A laptop can be powered by a battery or be plugged in. Jesus had the battery—He was God on the inside—but He always lived by the plug—He always lived by the source that came to Him through the Holy Spirit. He never operated on His own battery as God. He always lived dependent on the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the analogy of the plug. I heard that years ago and I thought, “Hey, that makes sense to me a little bit.” Although laptops were not what we were talking about then. We were talking about something else. I think it was a flashlight or something.

VI. THREE TEMPTATIONS

- A. **Stone to bread:** The first temptation was to gratify His physical desires without regard to God's will or trusting God. Sensuality is not just sexual; it is physical indulgence without reference to the Spirit.

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 [promise] of God.’” (Lk.4:3-4)**

1. The Lord supernaturally provided food to Israel in the wilderness giving them manna. Jesus was easily able to multiply bread for others (Lk. 9:10–17).
2. Israel in the wilderness was required to trust God for their food; so must Jesus trust His Father in the wilderness (Deut. 8:1-3).
3. Both Jesus, and the Israelites under Moses were to believe that God's word was reliable. God had revealed a plan for both that assured them that they would not die in the wilderness.
4. God is our source—obeying God's will requires waiting on God's timing for His provision.

The first temptation was to turn the stone to bread. Again, there was nothing wrong with Jesus eating bread. He had not eaten for forty days, but He had to wait on the Father because Israel in the wilderness had to wait on the Father to provide the water and the bread. Jesus was saying, in essence, "I am the same place that Israel was in, but I am going to obey where Israel grumbled and tested God."

- B. **Glory of all the kingdoms:** The second temptation was combination of pride and lust of the eyes. Satan showed Jesus as all the glory or splendor (NIV) of the nations. Satan was offering Jesus the glory of the nations without the suffering of the cross (Lk. 9:23).

⁵*The devil led Him up to a high place and showed Him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶*And he said to Him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. ⁷*If you worship me, it will all be yours."*
(Lk. 4:5-6, NIV)**

1. Authority was handed to devil by the first Adam and won back by the second Adam. God gave dominion or authority over the earth to Adam as a representative of the human race.
²⁶*"Let Us make man in Our image...let them have dominion...over all the earth..."
(Gen. 1:26)*
2. In sinning, Adam forfeited his authority to Satan (Gen. 3; Lk. 4:6). Jesus came to win back the dominion originally given to humans. Jesus, as the last Adam, won the rights to the dominion of the earth.

⁴***Whose minds the god of this age (Satan) has blinded, who do not believe. (2 Cor. 4:4)***

Most of you are familiar with this story. The second temptation was Satan showing Him the glory of all the kingdoms of the earth. Not just the power of all kingdoms, but their splendor: all of their riches, all the property, and the glamorous buildings and all the possessions and all the wealth of the nations. Satan said, "I am the god of this world; they are under my authority." That is not a complete statement. In the sovereignty of God, God let Adam give that place of authority over to Satan, because that place of authority had been given to Adam. You can see here in Luke 4:6, "Satan said to Jesus, 'I will give You all the authority and splendor of all the kingdoms because it was given to me.'" He meant by Adam. Adam had the dominion over the earth given to him by the Father, but when Adam sinned, he gave dominion to Satan. Satan said, "It's mine. I won it."

Jesus stood as the second Adam and won it back. He gained the victory as a Man. Between His victory in the wilderness and then the crowning achievement of the cross and resurrection, He won it. He completely destroyed Satan, and He won it legally. He did not just take it. He won it as a Man in the way that Adam lost it as a Man.

C. Jesus rebuked Satan and spoke the Word to him.

⁸And 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.’” (Lk. 4:8)

I want you to get this. When Satan was coming before Him, verse 8, Jesus said these simple words that a lot of believers never say, “Get behind me.” I have talked to believers for years and asked, “Do you ever just rebuke Satan.”

They say, well, no. I mean, you know.”

I say, “No, are you kidding? What do you mean ‘you know’?”

Jesus did it. James 4:7 says that if you rebuke the devil he will flee. That does not mean one sentence and he is gone. You stay with this, “In the name of Jesus, I command you to go.” This torment coming to your mind, your body, your home or your money or your situation, and you rebuke it. Jesus actually did it. He rebuked Satan. This is where we are learning a model from Him. He spoke the Word of God, He spoke the promise of God, and then He rebuked Satan.

D. **Throw Yourself down:** The third temptation was related to acting in pride. This temptation was to get Jesus to *test God* by His insistence on when and how God should fulfill His promises to Him. In this case, it was related to one of God's promises of protection over His life.

⁹Then 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.” ¹⁰For it is written: ‘He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you,’ ¹¹and, ‘In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.’” ¹²And Jesus answered and said to him, “It has been said, ‘You shall not tempt the Lord your God.’” (Lk. 4:9-12)

In the third temptation, Satan brought Jesus to Jerusalem. That is kind of intense because He was out in the wilderness, not very many miles from Jerusalem, maybe ten or twenty miles I guess, something like that, probably not that far. I do not know how he brought Jesus to Jerusalem—that is a pretty intense concept—but he did. He set Him on the pinnacle, at the very top of the highest building.

So here is Jesus, forty days fasting, standing up there. Like what? With the ultimate power in the dark realm—Satan—who had once been very high in the glory realm—as Lucifer—right here. I mean these things are strange to us, but that is the realm that they live in. It is not as strange to them as it is to us. So Jesus was there at the top of the pinnacle of the temple. I mean just stop and get your mind around that for a moment. It is like, “Wow, that is pretty intense.”

Then Satan said, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down because God promised to protect You.” In verse 10, Satan is quoting Psalm 91:11-12. He said, “God promised to protect You, Jesus. You know Psalm 91.”

Jesus said, “I know Psalm 91, but you are twisting it. You are twisting it because the Father did not tell Me to throw Myself down. I am not going to test the Lord. That is not what is going to happen. I refuse to test the Lord because the Bible said it.” He quoted Deuteronomy 6:16 again, “Do not test God.” You do not make God act on your terms; that is what it means to test God.

Israel tested the Lord in Exodus 17 when they did not have water. What it meant that Israel “tested the Lord” is that because God had not yet produced water out of the rock, they complained. I mean for forty years they were going to have water flowing out of the rock. Do you know how much water it was going to take to provide

enough water for three million people in the desert—600,000 men, plus women and children and livestock? Do you know how much water that was going to take? Water came out of a rock day after day after day after day. Food came down from heaven. When Israel did not have water at first, they got really mad at God. They said in essence, “God, You are not a good leader.” That is, they complained.

It was in their complaining that God said, “You have tested Me.” That is, you want Me to act on your terms in your time frame. That is called testing God. We call it complaining, but God calls it testing Him because in essence you are saying that God better produce on your terms or you are going to cast His leadership off your life and you are not going to trust Him any longer.

So Satan came to Jesus saying, “Jump down! I mean I have a Bible verse, Psalm 91. It says right there in the Bible that He will protect you.”

Jesus said, “Yeah, God will protect Me, but it is not for Me to determine the time and place of how God intervenes. I am not going to determine that. God determines that. If I jump off this temple, I am the one determining when God intervenes and how. I am going to trust Him instead of insisting on Him to do it in My time and My way. I am going to have gratitude and worship. I am not going to complain, which is what testing the Lord is all about.”

- E. Some suggest that people could see Jesus, and thus the temptation was to prove that He could do miracles anytime He wanted—miracles such as not being hurt after falling from the pinnacle of temple. Luke did not mention an audience, so one cannot be dogmatic on this.
- F. Jesus entrusted Himself to God's method and timing—to protect and provide for Him (1 Pet. 2:23).
²³ ***...who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously... (1 Pet. 2:23)***
- G. Israel tested God in the wilderness by seeking to force His hand (Ex. 17:7). Pride is expressed when we become offended when God does not act on our behalf on “our terms”—in our time and way.
- H. Satan quoted the Scriptures to make his case to Jesus (Ps 91:11-12); Jesus instantly saw how Satan twisted the Scripture. He responded by speaking the Word to Satan (Deut. 6:16).
¹¹ ***For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. ¹²In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone. (Ps. 91:11-12)***

¹⁶ ***You shall not tempt the Lord your God as you tempted Him in Massah. (Deut. 6:16)***
- I. The next opportune time in Scripture for Satan to tempt Jesus seems to be when Peter sought to talk Jesus out of dying on the cross (Mt. 16:21-23). Satan entered Judas (22:3), shifted Peter (22:31), and moved in great darkness related to the events surrounding Jesus going to the cross (Lk. 22:53).
¹³ ***When the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time. (Lk. 4:13)***

Well, it all came to an end in Luke 4:13, when the devil had tempted Him with every temptation and ended every one of them, forty days' worth. These were the three big ones, but undoubtedly there were many different versions of those three temptations. Satan departed from Him until an opportune time. Of course the opportune

time was some years later, related to the cross, where Satan came in full force again to get Jesus not to endure the cross. Jesus had victory in that too.

Beloved, I look at this passage and I marvel at what this Man walked in for our sake. Yet I also want to embrace the model of how He did it because it is meant to be instructive to us, to build our faith that the Lord says, "I intend for this to work in your life. I intend for this to work in the weakest believer's life if they will just draw on the Spirit," and to help our relationship with the Spirit, speak the Word of God, and believe what God says about us, about His love for us and our life.

Amen and amen! Let's stand before the Lord.

Lord, here we are before You. Lord, we love Your leadership. God, we love Your Word. We are all being tempted. Every one of us in this room is being tempted in various ways. Father, here we are before You. Holy Spirit, I ask You for Your leadership, even now. I ask You to minister to us across this room.