

Victory Over Temptation

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Preacher: Don Coleman

[0:00] Let's take God's Word this morning and turn to Luke chapter 4 and I want you to find verse 1.

That's pretty easy. It's the first one in the chapter. Chapter 4 and our text this morning, my text is verses 1 through 13. Interesting part of Luke's Gospel, familiar part of it, the temptations of Jesus Christ.

So let's read the text and then let's go forward. Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being tempted for 40 days by the devil.

And in those days he ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, he was hungry. Yeah. And the devil said to him, If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.

But Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. Then the devil, taking him up to a high mountain, showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

[1:18] And the devil said to him, All this authority I will give to you and their glory, for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.

Therefore, if you will worship before me, all will be yours. And 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.

Then 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. For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over you to keep you, and in their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.

And Jesus answered and said to him, It has been said, You shall not tempt the Lord your God. Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

Alright, familiar passage of Scripture. And I would also say that if there is one subject that we all think we are well versed on, know a lot about, it is the subject of temptation.

[2:32] Right? We think we know all about that. I mean, after all, we experience temptation every single day of our lives. All throughout the day. We are very familiar with that.

I heard about a mother who walked into her kitchen one day only to find her three-year-old son standing on a chair eating her fresh-baked cookies off the kitchen counter. And when she asked him, What do you think you are doing, young man?

And he just simply very innocently said to her, Well, I climbed up to smell them and my tooth got caught. That's kind of how we think about temptation.

You know, we think of it only in the sense we got caught doing it. But so we are well versed on the subject of temptation. We don't really need any more information about how to define it.

We experience it. We know about it. But we do need help defeating it. Do you? I heard one amen over here.

[3:32] Would you agree? We all need help defeating it. And part of defeating it comes in our understanding it. Understanding how it works. How Satan uses it and so forth.

Now, our text this morning will help us with that. I think very clearly. Offering us a number of tools, a number of ways, a number of resources. Information that we need to know in how to defeat Satan, defeat temptation.

And I say that even though I must admit to you that Luke's primary purpose in this text is not necessarily to offer us tools on how to avoid or how to defeat temptation.

His primary purpose here is to validate, to prove once again that Jesus is the righteous Son of God. That's his purpose here.

And that's really what Luke has been doing here for several chapters. In fact, you could argue that he's been doing that from the very beginning of his gospel. But more recently, he did that in his account of Jesus' baptism.

[4:35] That was all about validating the identity, the true identity of Jesus as the righteous Son of God. I mean, there he is being baptized. And immediately the Holy Spirit comes and settles upon him.

And then God the Father speaks out of heaven. And what does he say to him? He says, you are my beloved Son. That is about as great and the most authoritative declaration of the true identity of Jesus that you could ever get.

He is the righteous Son of God. But Luke also includes the genealogy, and this is what we looked at last week, again to validate, to prove that Jesus is the righteous Son of God.

He traces Jesus' genealogy all the way back to God himself. And so this is clearly his intent. And then Luke is intending to do that here in this record of Jesus' temptation, and, well, more specifically, his victory over Satan's temptations.

Though I assure you that this was certainly not the last time that Jesus would have to deal with Satan. All right? He's not just once and done, and now he's not going to have any problem with Satan anymore.

[5:52] Certainly he was tempted many, many, many times after this. And so to prove that Jesus is the righteous Son of God, that's Luke's intent in this passage.

I want you to know that. And Scripture means what it means, and it has one meaning, one intent, and it's the author's intent as he was inspired by the Holy Spirit, and Luke's intent is to validate that Jesus is the righteous Son of God.

That said, there are many applications. Many applications of Scripture, and I think very clearly that the Holy Spirit provides for us in this text, in this event in the life of Jesus.

He provides for us a supreme example for us to follow in our personal struggle with Satan and with sin.

And so that's what I want to draw from this text. You see, Jesus' victory over Satan provides us with, I believe, a method for overcoming temptation.

[6:53] There's a method here, regardless of its source, by the way. Whether, like with Jesus, it comes from some satanic or demonic source, and certainly temptation comes from that source, certainly.

Or, whether, as is usually the case with us, the source is our own sinful flesh. And by the way, Jesus was not tempted by his flesh.

He had no sinful flesh. He was tempted by Satan himself. But we are too. But we are also tempted by our flesh as well. In fact, I would say more often that is the source of our temptation.

Our own flesh. Now, remember what Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10, 13. He said, No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man.

But God is faithful. I love that part of it. God is faithful who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation, what? Will provide the way of escape also, so that you are able, will be able to endure it.

[8:02] So God provides a way of escape, and this passage helps us learn that way of escape from temptation. And so what can we learn here from Jesus about victory over temptation?

Would it be valuable to you? I think so. Now, first then, if you're going to realize victory over temptation, then you must, first of all, familiarize yourself with the ways of the tempter.

And so number one, number one in the victory over temptation, put it down just this way, be alerted to the ways of Satan. That's number one. If you're going to have victory over temptation, then be alerted to the ways of Satan.

In the passage, five times Luke refers to the prince of the demons as the devil. Five times you see that. He's the devil.

In the Greek, it is the word diabolos. We get our word diabolical from this word, but the word means slanderer. It means accuser.

[9:15] So five times Luke in the text refers to him as the devil. Now, in the King James and New King James, there is inserted a little phrase that doesn't appear in some other versions of the Bible.

And it is where Jesus, in verse 8, calls him Satan. Uses the word Satan. Don't get too concerned about that. You can go to Matthew.

Matthew's account of this same thing. And you'll find there that Jesus said, Get behind me, Satan. Or be gone, Satan. So he refers to him as Satan.

Satan. And this too is a descriptive word that's used kind of as a proper noun for Satan, though it is really not his name. He is more often referred to as Satan.

So it has become almost synonymous to his name. The word comes straight out of the Greek on into the English. It's called a transliteration. That is, they just took the Greek word and then put it into the English as it would sound in English.

[10:21] It is the word Satanos. And it is Satan. But the word means adversary. So here are two descriptions of Satan.

He is the accuser, slanderer. He is the adversary. Now, what does the Bible tell us about Satan? Well, he was once called, and this was his name, Lucifer.

His name was Lucifer. He was a bright shining angel, very likely an archangel. One of the highest of God's creations. Lucifer, the name Lucifer, means son of the morning.

In fact, you might not know this, or remember this, but in Ezekiel 28, verse 15, God said this about Lucifer. He said, you are perfect in your ways from the day you were created.

And that's a pretty good statement from God. Perfect in your ways from the day of creation. But then he adds this. He says, till unrighteousness was found in you.

[11:27] And we know something about that. We remember something about that from Scripture. Isaiah 14, verse 13 tells us that Lucifer desired to exalt his throne above the stars of God.

That means to exalt himself above God. It says that he made himself like, attempted to make himself like the Most High. And of course, because of that, according to Revelation 12, verse 4, Satan was cast out of heaven and took with him, by the way, one-third of the population of all the angels, one-third of the angels that rebelled with him, followed him.

They were all cast out of heaven. In fact, Jesus said in Luke 10, 18, I think referring to his pre-incarnate existence, Jesus said, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

This is what the Bible says about Satan, about the devil, about Lucifer. And the Bible describes him as a liar.

He, in fact, is the father of all lies. The Bible describes Satan as a murderer, a murderer from the very beginning. A dragon, a snake, the evil one, the accuser of God's people, the God of this world, the prince of the power of the air, a roaring lion seeking to devour, the tempter, to just name a few.

[12:58] And, of course, this last one is how we see him here in this text. Now, that's who he is. A little bit about who he is. But it is supremely important for us to familiarize ourselves with how he works.

We need to know his strategy. We need to know how Satan works. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 2, 11, we are not ignorant of his devices. I'm afraid we are ignorant of his devices.

I think Paul was speaking of we in the sense of himself and those that he ministered with. They were not deceived. But we are. We are ignorant of his devices. And we need to be informed about the ways of Satan.

And we can learn, I think, a great deal about that from this encounter with Jesus. Satan and Jesus. In the first place, you ought to know, be aware, be alerted to his timing.

Satan's timing. This event took place when? It took place right after Jesus' baptism. Verse 1 says, Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from Jordan.

[14:14] That's where he was baptized. So he's returning right after his baptism. And he's led by the Spirit into the wilderness. So this event takes place right after his baptism.

Now, I believe that Satan tempted Jesus more than just three times here. In fact, the grammar, I think, even suggests it. He tempted him throughout his 40 days of fasting.

And then after the 40 days of fast, Jesus, of course, was extremely hungry, as we all would be. And Satan turned up the heat at that point and threw at him three, not only just three additional temptations, but three big ones.

It's almost as if he brought out the big guns, so to speak, here at the end of his 40-day fast. Now, here's the point that we need to get and apply to our own lives. Satan's timing is always impeccable.

Have you learned that? Have you discovered that? I tell you, Satan will tempt you when you are at your highest spiritually. Have you discovered that?

[15 : 19] But also, Satan will tempt you when you are at your lowest physically and emotionally. He tempts you at other times, too, but his timing is impeccable at those two times.

And he always chooses, then, the time when we are the most vulnerable to his deceptions and his lies. So that when he lies to us, we're more apt to believe them.

More apt to succumb to the temptation. When we are at these times in our lives, and we need to recognize that. We need to be aware of that. We see both of these things, I think, taking place in the life of Jesus.

Same time with Jesus. Now, think about it. When did the temptation take place? After immediately following his baptism. Jesus' baptism.

What happened there? Do you remember? A glorious thing happened. Jesus was not only baptized, but as soon as he came up out of the water, the Holy Spirit, God the Holy Spirit, came out of heaven and lighted, came upon him in the likeness of a dove.

[16 : 28] Thus confirming his true identity. But not only that, but God the Father spoke out of heaven and said, You are my beloved Son. Come, in you I am well pleased.

What a tremendous affirmation of his true identity and God's pleasure in him. I tell you, Jesus was at his highest spiritually speaking from a human perspective.

From his human perspective as a man. And Satan chose that time to attack him. You see, Jesus was here out in the wilderness, but he was not out of God's will here.

He didn't just kind of happen to go out there by mistake. He was not out of God's will. The Holy Spirit had led him out into the wilderness at this time. And so Jesus was doing exactly what God wanted Jesus to do.

And so this is what we need to see. And we need to apply to our own lives. You can be in the very center of God's will for you. And doing exactly what God wants you to be doing.

[17 : 38] And you can be right there experiencing this glorious blessing of God. Right in the center of his will. And experiencing a great spiritual high in your life.

Sweet time with God. Sweet time of service. Maybe it's a great time of worship. Maybe privately. Maybe even corporately. And you can be at that kind of pinnacle of your life at that moment. And right there. Right then and there. You can encounter some of the most severest of temptations. At that very time. Don't be surprised by that.

Don't be surprised when that happens. Be alerted to the ways of Satan. His timing. But also notice that Satan pulled out the big guns. So to speak.

At a time when Jesus was at his lowest physically. Need to recognize that as well. Jesus had been fasting for 40 days. He was certainly hungry.

[18 : 39] And not just hungry. But he was weak physically. And Satan came after him. Guns blazing. At that time. Now listen.

Understand this about Satan. He is always a coward. Do you know that? Don't ever be tempted to worship Satan as some great being.

He's a coward. A coward. He either will blindside you when you least expect him. Or he will wait until you are tired.

Maybe even physically ill. Weak. Weak. Emotionally wrung out. Maybe even a time of discouragement.

Where there has been some failure. Or some problem. He will wait until that opportune time. So understand that about Satan's ways.

[19 : 38] Now let me tell you something else about it. Not only his timing. But also his truth. Satan's truth. No. Satan has his own kind of truth. That he wants us to believe.

I tell you. Satan is worse than the National Enquirer magazine. Have you ever stood there in the line of Walmart or grocery store? Need to really kind of keep your eyes off the magazines that are posted there.

But the National Enquirer will have some of the most bizarre headlines and pictures you'd ever want to see. Have you ever noticed that? Haven't you? And they say that every article in the National Enquirer has some element of truth in it.

You know, some mother gives birth to an alien. Well, she gave birth. That's part of the truth. But the rest of it's a lie. There's just kind of a mixture of truth and lie.

More lie than truth. And that's how Satan works. I tell you. Seriously. Satan always offers a mixed bag of truth and error. And just enough truth to make it believable.

[20:40] And if not believable, just enough truth to make it tantalizing. Just enough truth to offer you the opportunity to rationalize the rightness of it or the validity of it.

And Satan, that's the way he is. He's a deceiver. He's a deceiver. And consider what he said to Jesus. In fact, the second temptation probably is the one that brings this out more clearly. In verse 5, look at it. Then the devil, taking him up on a high mountain, showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. This is evidently some supernatural thing.

And the devil said to him, All this authority I will give you and their glory. For this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.

Now, that's what Satan said. Is there any truth there? Well, actually, yes. There is a truth in that all the kingdoms of the world have been delivered to Satan.

[21:43] Albeit temporarily. But they have been given under his sway. In fact, John 12, 31 says Satan is the ruler of this world. And he is.

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4, 4, Satan is the god of this world. Now, that part of it is, so to speak, true. What about the error?

What Satan failed to say was that his rule was granted by God. Any authority he may have, any kind of rulership he may have on this planet, in this world now, is something that God has given to him, granted him.

And he also failed to say, and maybe Satan was just deceived himself, that his rule was temporary. But here's the biggest part of the lie.

When Satan said, all this authority I will give you, I give it to whomever I wish, that is an outright lie. Satan had no such authority. None whatsoever.

[22:42] God alone has that authority. God alone sets up kings and authorities and nations, establishes nations. Acts 17, 26, he determines their times and he sets their boundaries.

Satan had no such authority. See what he does? He mixes the truth with error. And he packages it together so that it is alluring, deceptive.

It's tantalizing. Maybe it's true, you know. I tell you lately, I've been getting these rash of emails.

Maybe you get these too. They always go to my junk email.

But I check the junk email every once in a while because something good will end up there. And I get these emails from somebody in some of the country saying, You have \$5 million here.

All you have to do, you know, do thus and such. Or, you know, partner with me. This inheritance is just right here. And if we'll work together, we can split this, you know, amazing amount of money.

[23:45] Well, how ridiculous. And yet, it's tantalizing it. You're just tempted to want to make that click. Maybe check it out and go for it. I hope you haven't. But see, this is the way Satan works.

He mixes just enough truth to make it alluring. To make it somehow even somewhat believable.

So be alert to the ways of Satan. His timing. His truth. A third thing. His tactics. Satan's tactics.

Satan's tactics really are not that hard to figure out.

They're really not. In the first place, know that he always promises the best on the front end. Know this about Satan.

He always promises the best first. And then he reserves the worst for last. And he doesn't even mention that part of it. So what's he doing with Jesus and his temptation?

[24:49] He's saying to Jesus, bread now. You're hungry. You can get that bread right now. Right? All you have to do is just take these stones and turn them into bread. Bread now, Jesus.

Or kingship now. He says, look out at all the nations, all the kingdoms of the world. They can all be yours. Just bow down now. You can have them right now.

Don't wait for that, Jesus. There's no need to suffer and to die upon a cross. You can have it right now. This is Satan's method. He offers the best first.

Some of you have been around long enough to remember a beer commercial some years ago. And the one I remember the most is kind of this picture of these guys.

You know, they're out on that bass boat out in the middle of this really beautiful lake. And there's the mountains in the backdrop. And, you know, it's just one of these gorgeous scenes.

[25:48] And these guys are just having great fellowship with one another. They're all sitting there on the bass boat. And they don't have a care in the world. They're having the greatest time of their life. They're not really doing any fishing.

What they're doing really is tipping back those bottles of beer. And then one of them says, you know, it doesn't get any better than this. Remember those commercials? Do you know it's true? Do you know he's right? Do you know it? It doesn't get any better. It only gets worse. That's Satan's method, you see.

Satan always promises the best on the front end. You can have it right now. What is it you want? You can have it right now. And then he fails to tell you about the worst that comes later.

But God is just the opposite. He lets us endure the worst now, but it's always the best for last. Do you understand that? That's why Satan's temptations are sometimes so tantalizing.

[26 : 48] We don't want the worst now. We want the best now. But God always saves the best for last. For the believer, the best is always yet to come. But Satan's tactic is to tempt us to grab and want the best now, or what seems to be the best now, and then not let us know that we're actually forfeiting the best that comes later, which God has for us.

And so to our young people, he says, have pleasure, the pleasure of physical intimacy. Now, why wait? Why get married for that? You can have it right now. Have the best right now, or what seems to be.

Or to the gambler, he says, Hey, have the reward of wealth now, and you don't even have to work for it. Have it right now.

Take what you want now. That's what Satan promises, and to some degree, he can deliver, or it may seem like he's delivering it. And you can enjoy the pleasures, the rewards of sin for a season. But this is Satan's method. Get it now. Why wait for God's best? Why wait and follow God's plan and God's provision? You can have it right now.

[28 : 07] That's his tactic. Second, he tempts you to want the right thing for the wrong reason. This is his tactic. He offers the best first, and then he will tempt you to want good things, a right thing, a valid thing, but to want it for the wrong reason.

And to obtain it in the wrong way. So, this is what we see in these temptations of Jesus. Is there anything wrong with wanting bread?

Is that a valid thing to want? Most certainly. Is it legitimate to want to eat bread and to eat bread? Of course. Would it have been wrong for Jesus to command the rocks, turn the rocks into bread at that very moment?

Absolutely. It would have been wrong. Why? Because that would have revealed his distrust in God's, the Father's provision for him, his promise to provide his every need.

Satan used the same tactic with Adam and Eve. Do you remember? He offered all, he gave them all of their provision. Everything they could ever want and need was there, but they were just not to eat from one tree.

[29 : 29] And Satan got Adam and Eve to thinking that God was being unfair. God was holding out on them. That somehow God did not want the best for them.

That's Satan's way. And they succumbed to the temptation. We've been suffering ever since. Satan tempted you to want valid things, legitimate things, but to want them for the wrong reason.

Was there anything wrong with Jesus wanting to rule the kingdoms of the world? Well, actually, no. Not for Jesus it wasn't wrong. It would be his to rule anyway.

Would it have been wrong for him to take it now? Take that rulership at that very moment by bowing down to Satan? Well, absolutely, certainly would it. And if Jesus had submitted to Satan's temptation, he would have lost everything.

And so would we. Was there anything sinful about trusting God's Word to protect and keep Jesus from harm? No, nothing wrong with that.

[30 : 36] Anything wrong with us trusting God to protect us? Nothing wrong with that. God had made certain promises concerning His Son, concerning the Messiah.

Satan quoted them in verses 10 and 11. Satan knows Scripture. He quoted from Psalm 91, I think it was. So nothing wrong with wanting God and trusting God to protect, to keep Jesus from all harm. But would it have been wrong for Jesus to presume upon God and jump from the pinnacle of the temple down several hundred feet into the Kidron Valley?

Would that have been wrong for Jesus? Sure. It would have been wrong. Why? Because that's putting God to the test. You say, well, you know, we're supposed to live by faith.

But that doesn't mean you put God to the test and presume upon God. You follow His Word. And so, this is Satan's tactic to want legitimate things, but to get them, to obtain them the wrong way.

[31:48] We need to know Satan's tactics. He always promises the best first and the worst last. And he always requires or tempts you to want good, legitimate things for the wrong reason and to obtain them by the wrong way, wrong method.

So, first of all, be alerted to the ways of Satan. Second, be armed with the weapons of the saved or the saints.

Be armed with the weapons of the saved. We can find in this text a number of weapons that we have against temptation. The first one is obvious.

It's the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit. Did you notice that Luke emphasizes here that Jesus is not in the wilderness accidentally?

That Jesus is not out here in the wilderness being tempted by Satan because He was careless, going somewhere where He shouldn't go, being somewhere where He shouldn't be.

[32:54] He doesn't say that at all. In fact, it's just the opposite. Jesus is not someplace where He's not supposed to be. He was led there by the Holy Spirit.

And the reason was because He was full of the Holy Spirit. That's what verse 1 says. Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit. Our first weapon, dear Christian, our weapon against the ways of Satan is to be full of the Holy Spirit.

What does that mean? Does it mean some kind of existential experience, some mystical thing that we experience? No. To be full of the Holy Spirit means that you are totally yielded to His control and power in your life.

Paul said in Ephesians 5.18, Be not drunk with wine where there is dissipation, debauchery, but what? Be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Literally, be being filled. So full of the Holy Spirit that you're not full of anything else. And it's not talking about having more of the Holy Spirit.

[34:13] It's talking about the Holy Spirit having complete control of you. Being full of the Holy Spirit. 100% yielded to the power and control and leadership of the Holy Spirit.

And so it's really quite simple. When you are full of the Holy Spirit in this way, you will be led by the Holy Spirit and you will never find yourself places where you shouldn't be and doing things that you should not be doing.

That's a pretty simple formula. And listen, let me show you something interesting here in the text. Compare verse 1 with verse 14. Now verse 14 is outside of our text, but I want you to compare these two verses.

In verse 1, Jesus was what? Full of the Holy Spirit when He went into the wilderness. What does it say about Him in verse 14? It says that Jesus came out of the wilderness, what?

In the power of the Holy Spirit. In the power of the Spirit. Those two go together. Full of the Holy Spirit. Empowered by the Holy Spirit.

[35:14] Led and empowered by the Holy Spirit. And you'll not find yourself places where God doesn't want you to be. And you'll not be finding yourself doing things or tempted to do things that God does not want you to be doing.

To be full of the Holy Spirit. Here's a little poetic axiom for the Spirit-filled Christian. Very simple. Here is a fact that should help you fight a bit longer.

The things that don't kill you outright just make you stronger. That's an interesting axiom. That is as long as you are full of the Holy Spirit.

Here's a second weapon available to the believer. One that is, I think, equally obvious. Maybe even more obvious. That is the Holy Scriptures. Not only the Holy Spirit, but the Holy Scriptures.

Jesus, you certainly noticed, answered every one of Satan's temptations with Scripture. Every one of them. Now, that's pretty incredible. You say, what's so incredible about that?

[36:11] Well, it's incredible considering that if there ever was a person who had the authority to answer Satan in his own words, it was Jesus. Have you thought about that?

I mean, He's the living Word of God. But even Jesus took Satan to the Word of God. Even Jesus, the Son of God, the Word of God, answered Satan's temptations with Scripture, with the Bible.

Now, let me ask you something. It doesn't take much to figure this out. If the Lord Jesus Christ trusts the Holy Spirit to defeat Satan, then shouldn't we? And I guess it shouldn't go without saying that you can't use the Scripture as a weapon if you don't know it.

You don't know it. Let me give you a third weapon. The Holy Spirit, the Holy Scriptures, and third, a holy solitude. A holy solitude. What's this whole event about?

It all started out with Jesus being alone with God. He's out there praying and fasting. He sought a holy solitude with God.

[37 : 18] In fact, Luke chapter 4 is only one example of the many times that Jesus sought solitude with the Father.

In fact, in Luke chapter 5, verse 16, you can jot this down, it says, He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.

Often. He got alone with God. A holy solitude. Tremendous weapon in our battle against Satan and against temptation.

Here's one more weapon. A holy sensitivity. A holy sensitivity. Sensitivity to what? Well, I would say, first of all, to the inevitability of temptation.

Are you sensitive to that? That it's inevitable? That temptation doesn't come because you're just so out of fellowship with God. It does come as a result of that.

[38 : 17] Temptation's going to come. It's inevitable. It's just going to happen. And, as a matter of fact, there is a pattern, I think, introduced here in the text. A pattern that we should be sensitive to in our own lives.

Jesus was led by the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, into the wilderness. It was apparently a time of testing, time of preparation.

It certainly was a preordained time that He was going to do battle with Satan. And so, this is all orchestrated, organized, led by God.

Now, here's the pattern. God sends a test or trial, whatever term you want to use, into your life. And what does Satan do?

He turns it into a temptation. Think about that. God sends a trial or a test into your life and He does that many times in our lives.

[39 : 15] And Satan turns it into a temptation. For example, suppose someone in your family contracts a deadly disease. Maybe it's even a terminal disease.

Could that sickness be a test from God? Yeah. Can be. Can be.

To grow your faith. To mature spiritually. God's all about doing that in our lives. Can God send a test like that into your life to grow you, to mature you, to turn, maybe turn you away from worldly things?

Get your attention in that regard? To turn us back to God? Alright, so if that's the case, does Satan tempt us through sicknesses? The answer is yes.

He certainly does. To work despair into our lives. That's his desire. To work anger, bitterness because of what's going on, these circumstantial things.

[40 : 29] To certainly turn us away from our devotion to God. suppose you lose your job. Could that be from God? It can be.

God can allow that. Why? God may want to build in you some spiritual character. Your job may be, may have become an idol to you.

Does Satan tempt us through that trial, that kind of a trial? Surely. Surely he does. To work resentment, discouragement, bitterness, to work revenge.

Every trial God sends in your life, Satan will attempt to turn it into a temptation. He's going to do that every time he did that with Jesus. Suppose on the other side of it, in kind of a different viewpoint, suppose you get a promotion and maybe a big fat raise and now you are better off financially than you've ever been in your entire life.

can a promotion be a trial from God? It can. Prosperity is often a trial, a testing from God to see how you will react to that, respond to that, how you'll handle that blessing, see if your heart will be full of gratitude, giving God the glory and the praise, or maybe it will make you more giving, see if it's going to make you more giving to kingdom work, God gives you an extra blessing because He wants you to bless others, bless His work, or will it produce in you greed, or other things like that.

[42 : 13] And so then, does Satan tempt us through that kind of a trial? Absolutely. To work pride? To work greed?

Get more, so I keep more. To work self-sufficiency in your life, to tempt you in that regard? See, here is an effective weapon against temptation.

It's a holy sensitivity on the front end to the inevitability of temptation. Martin Luther once said that to make a minister of God, three things are required.

Meditation, prayer, and temptation. I would say they would apply not only to those God is calling to the ministry, but every believer. Meditation, prayer, and temptation.

A holy sensitivity. First, to the inevitability of temptation, and second, to the need for constant vigilance. Jesus knew that Satan was not through with Him.

[43 : 16] He knew that. Jesus knew that Satan would come back again and again and again. In fact, look at verse 13. It says, now, when the devil had ended every temptation, that is, this series of temptations, he departed from Him, kind of, alright, gave up on Him, but, what does it say?

until an opportune time. Satan came back. Satan's third temptation, by the way, or second, really all three of the temptations, are connected in some way to the cross and tempting Jesus to bypass His mission.

The cross. If Jesus had bowed down to Satan, it was all over. If Jesus had jumped from the pinnacle of the temple, it would be all over. He'd be dead, graveyard dead, and it would be done. But that would not be the last time Satan tempted Jesus to bypass the cross, by the way. He did it through Peter, when Peter tempted Jesus not to go to the cross.

The Bible says Jesus was beginning to tell them that He must die and so forth, and Peter said that shall never be. And Jesus probably gave Peter's most harsh rebuke.

[44 : 37] He said, get behind me, Satan. This is the temptation of Satan. Bypass the cross. He did it in the garden, just before Jesus would be arrested and die on the cross.

In Jesus, not my will, but your will be done. He did it, I think, even on the cross. When Jesus was on the cross, we had these people coming by and saying, come down from the cross.

Come down. If you are, come down, come down. That's Satan saying, please come down. I don't want you to die on the cross. It's a temptation. He could have called 10,000 angels at that very moment.

He's tempted over and over again. It's an ongoing thing. Be sensitive. Have a holy sensitivity to that. Victory over temptation comes by being alerted to the ways of Satan.

And being armed with the weapons of the saved. And one more very quickly, be attracted to the worth of the Son. This is probably the best one.

[45 : 40] You say, well, where is that in here? Well, in a sense, this is not exemplified by anything Jesus did. It is conveyed to us in the text by who Jesus is.

And who is He? He is the precious beloved Son of God. And so, we should look to Jesus.

With every temptation, we should know that Jesus has endured that before us. And we look to Him. With every temptation, we should look to Him and realize that no matter what the temptation promises, Jesus is better.

and what He promises is infinitely better. No matter what pleasures the sin may bring us, and sin does bring us pleasure, but no matter what, it is only for a season.

And our sweet fellowship with Jesus is much more valuable than that. God spoke from heaven. He said, you are my beloved son. In you I am well pleased.

[47 : 00] Even Satan affirmed the sonship of Jesus. He did not deny it. Jesus is the precious, beloved, son of God who endured all of the sin, temptation rather, Savior, that Satan could throw at him so that he could be our sympathetic Savior.

How could we then succumb to the temptation, grab hold of the pleasure it offers for a season?

How could we do that? Knowing that Jesus is our Savior. His value, His worth is beyond any earthly evaluation.

Certainly above any promise of treasure, any promise of reward that Satan might give us. Jesus' worth, His greatness is beyond all measure.

How then do we have victory over temptation? How? Be alerted to the ways of Satan. Be armed with the weapons of the saved.

[48 : 25] And be attracted, always attracted, to the great, infinite worth of the Son. .

Thank you.