

THE DEVIL OF A TIME
Luke 4:1-13

I. YOUR DEVIL IS TOO SMALL

- A. *“And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit ... was led by the Spirit for forty days in the wilderness, tempted by the devil.” (Luke 4:1-2)*
- B. What Do You Fear in the Future?
 - 1. Do you fear sickness, poverty, unpopularity, criticism, or death?
 - 2. Do you fear the possibility of doing wrong?
- C. The Difference Between Temptation and Testing.
 - 1. You’ll like one, and you won’t like the other.
 - 2. The test will be tough; the temptation will seem pleasurable.

II. THE FORK IN THE ROAD

- A. *“If you are the Son of God ... To you I will give all this authority and their glory ...” (Luke 4:3&6)*
- B. We Are in a War Zone.
 - 1. “I am sure that the bit of road that most requires to be illuminated is the point where it forks.” (John Bailey)
 - 2. Are we going to follow the leading of the Spirit, or the tempting of the devil.
- C. Freedom of Choice.
 - 1. We can choose between good and evil, between being true or false, between being brave or cowardly, between being generous or selfish.
 - 2. A mother whose son has been killed may be tempted to become bitter. One who is facing a difficult life situation may be tempted to escape by drinking.

III. THREE FACES OF TEMPTATION

- A. Spiritual Temptation.
 - 1. Is God real? Does God care? Being tempted to try other religions.
 - 2. “Spiritual growth is stunted by sin ... The believer who indulges in sin becomes spiritually paralyzed.” (Don Anderson)
- B. Physical Temptation.
 - 1. Disease may tempt us to become bitter. Sexual attraction may tempt us to forget our marriage vows.
 - 2. Overeating, alcoholism, drug addiction, and other overindulgences are sin.
 - 3. Jim Bakker confessed to “the temptation to have more, do more, earn more ... look the other way rather than confront wrongs.”
- C. Mental Temptation.
 - 1. *“If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out ... And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off ...” (Mt. 5:29&30)*
 - 2. Try having a PMA (Positive Mental Attitude).

Prayer Concerns: Members – Burney Biesel, Sarah Clark, Dorys Dawson, Windy Mohead Frank, Harry Hart, Bill Hardy, Ruth Dale Hurt, Anne Miller, Carol Webb ... Friends – Melinda Rice Ashley, Bobby Atkins, J.L. Bizzle, Lane Brasfield, Pat Bryan, Janie Canada, Arletta Crane, Jonathan Cupples, Helen & Doyle Davis, Clara Garrett, Margaret Gauldin, Kathy Greer, Jean Hansford, Peggy Haslop, Jim Hixon, Benette Hobday, Debra Holt, Kim Evans Lee, Lawrence Lusk, Morgan & Mary Beth O’Dell, Connie Overton, Joan Owens, Theresa Patrick, Shirley Rice, Edith Robinson, David Smith, Joseph David Smith, Mary Jane Webb ...

Christian Sympathy is extended to **Donna Haslop and family** on the death of her husband, **Brian Haslop**, who died on Thursday, February 22. Our sympathy is also extended to **John Whitaker and family** on the death of his son, **Sam E. Whitaker**, who died on Sunday, February 11.

PASTORAL PRAYER

O God, we find ourselves tempted so often, and how lonely that experience always is. Suddenly we have to decide whether to say yes or no, and nobody is singing hymns then, and the right decision is not easy – it’s ours to make, and all of our best instincts are tested. Has the seed of decency been planted deeply enough inside us that it can hold out?

In these solitary moments of testing, O God, be with us. We cannot know where a careless step thoughtlessly taken might lead us. Paths that look so good sometimes lead to such misery. So make us stop and think. And Father, if our mistakes do lead us to the far country, help us come to ourselves enough to head back home, knowing that you will stand at the door ready to welcome us back.

Be with those whose hardest testing comes this week. Show us ways to bring courage to them, along with hope and discipline. And guard us, we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who taught us to pray ...

THE LORD’S PRAYER: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

LUKE 4:1-13

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit for forty days in the wilderness, tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing in those days; and when they were ended, he was hungry. The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’” And the devil took him up, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory; for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it shall all be yours.” And Jesus answered him, “It is written,

‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.’”

And he took him to Jerusalem, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here; for it is written,

‘He will give his angels charge of you, to guard you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’”

And Jesus answered him. “It is said, ‘You shall not tempt the Lord your God.’” And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

SERMON SCHEDULE

In the Sanctuary:

March 4 *The Journey to Jerusalem* Luke 13:31-35
The Sacrament of Holy Communion

March 11 *Who Needs to Repent?* Luke 13:1-9

On the Radio (1450 AM):

March 4 *Being Hard to Please* Philippians 4:4-10

March 11 *A Life of Endurance* James 1:1-18