

THE SUFFERING SERVANT: HELPING THE TEMPTED

Reading of the Word

Luke 4:1-13

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

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

3 The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” 4 And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’”

5 And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, 6 and said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. 7 If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” 8 And Jesus answered him, “It is written, “‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.’”

9 And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, 10 for it is written, “‘He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,’ 11 and “‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’” 12 And Jesus answered him, “It is said, “‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

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

Prayer

Preface

Good morning My name is Eric Mattie, I’m stepping in for Pastor Ryan who is under the weather this week and I’ve taken on the preaching duties. This assignment came late in the week. Which means that this week I’m take little detour on our preaching through Colossians verse by verse . Rather I’m going to apply one verse in Ryan’s assigned passage by linking it to the larger Luke passage we just read together.

Colossians 2:9–10

For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.

And I wish to show how this truth plays out in the temptation of Jesus and how it help us in temptation. I’ll simply point it out. Yet our main stay will be in Luke’s account.

Warm Up

As we start out here I want to confess something to you. this morning

I have been a very judgmental man against a group of Christians. That group of Christians are the disciple of Jesus. I have judged them in previous sermon preparations and presentations about how blinded they were to Christ.

I mean, they ate with Him, slept with Him traveled with him. They did ministry together and laughed and cried...

Yet I'm still amazed that disciples like Peter were willing to go to battle for the Lord, take up there sword and cut ears off. They know he was Messiah the conquering King. Yet they missed the prophecies that said he would suffer. They missed Jesus very words that he was going to Jerusalem to die... with a purpose.

I can think "wow they are thick headed and missed who Jesus was."

But then...

I get to passages like Luke 4:1-13 and I'm faced with the hypocrisy in my own life.

I can be thick headed and miss who Jesus is here.

Introduction

- *Where my confession of hypocrisy comes into this... is that I've always look at Jesus in this account as "Jesus our example".*
- But I saw it in a very humanistic way.
Like I'd go to this passage like I goto a Handyman's do it your self book and look for the steps.
- Because he does exemplify how to fight temptation here. I can leave you with principles of combatting temptation and pray that you walk upright faith-filled lives before the Lord.

But there is something deeper in Christ example here and I realize I wish for something bigger than just moral living. I want you to have an upright heart of loving and worshipping Jesus for who He truly is. For us all to Love God with our whole heart soul mind and strength

God's word says that Jesus suffered when he was tempted. But there was a reason for that... it was to help those who were being tempted. (Heb 2:17,18)

In fact that is the Title of My Message this morning: The Suffering Servant: Helping the Tempted

Keeping in mind this account of Jesus' temptation, we see three ways he helps us.

I'm going to list them, and then we take brief look at each of the one at a time

The Temptation of Jesus shows Christ helping as...

1. Our Representative who empathizes
2. Our Redeemer who was tempted in every way
3. Our Righteousness who learned obedience

Let's look at the first one.

The Temptation of Jesus shows Christ helping as...

1. Our Representative who Empathizes

“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses ..” Hebrew 2:15a

There is a questionable explanation that says Jesus's temptation was different since he is fully God. This explanation can create doubt in our heart- I want to address that.

What lies behind the explanation is the argument that say this:

- a. “One difference of Jesus' temptation experiences is that he is God Incarnate, which means that, since God cannot sin, he (Jesus) cannot sin. Therefore his temptations were not genuine.”

It is true that we need recognize Jesus in the proper identity.

I want us to remember the framework we need to see Jesus properly in. And it is the framework of seeing Jesus as Truly God. Truly Man. One Person and two natures.

There is an aspect of mystery that we encounter when it comes to the incarnation of the Son of God, that we will never understand. But we can know that if we look within these guidelines this is where the mystery lies and anything out side of that is heresy

Let me give you a little history without boring you

This frame work- Fully God Fully Man and specifically one person two natures boundary comes to us from the historical Council of Chalcedon. Where it basically says Jesus is not like Spiderman.

See, 500 bishops got together in October of 451 and dealt with the question of just How God became human?

THEY ALSO ADDRESSED how do we navigate the two extreme heresy ATTACKING ORTHODOXY of that day that said.....

Jesus is like Spiderman - Do you know Spiderman? A man bite by a radioactive spider and now was a mix between a man and spider? He had the abilities of a spider and used them as a superhero? ... **Well, people were teaching that Jesus was a mixture of two natures that make a third being. Neither ingredients in this mixture were fully divine nor fully human.**

The other heresy was being taught that Jesus was like the Hulk- another superhero who is actually two different people that have independent personalities and each resents the other. **Well people were teaching Jesus was 2 persons one divine and one human.**

This is not how we are to understand the MYSTERY OF THE INCARNATION THE Person of Jesus. He is one person 2 distinct natures without MIXTURE WITHOUT CONFUSION WITHOUT SEPARATION WITHOUT DIVISION

So as we read about the temptation of Christ we are to see and know that the 2 natures always and everywhere are united.

When the question is asked "Well who does the healing or praying or teaching or know things unknowable" we are to answer. It is the one person Jesus the son of God. Some of the heavier theological lifting we leave the fuller rational to the mystery of the incarnation.

Paul in Colossians says "For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily," 2:9

Christ could not sin, because he was fully God.

Yet..

Jesus was also Fully / Truly Man. It was necessary for him to become fully human. Why?

BECAUSE "THAT WHICH IS NOT ASSUMED IS NOT HEALED"

This phrase means that Christ saves human nature by assuming it, or taking it on. In terms of body and soul-need both in order to be fully human. Jesus takes on fully humanity in order to save full humanity.

17 Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. "

Hebrews 2:17

POINT:

As a man, the Son became fully vulnerable to the pains and strains of human life, including temptation to sin.

PREACH:

That he is God the Son did not protect him from understanding the strain of the pull to commit sin, or from any of the suffering he endured. Instead, these sufferings were his training to become perfected to function as a sympathetic priest who reconciles us to God

POINT: He is our representative.

- Before we became Christian, Adam was our representative
- Both Adam and Christ stand as Representatives of a people.
 - Adam represents all those who are born from him physically,
 - Jesus Christ represents all of those who are born from Him spiritually.

They both- Adam and Christ- bequeath to those they represent certain results or “gifts” from what they accomplished.

Those who trust their full salvation in Jesus are represented by him.

PREACH

So when we see Christ combating temptation here in this account, I don't want you to just see Jesus giving us an example on how to fight temptation. Though the principles are good. But I want you to see that

- as our High Priest- Jesus understands our weakness greater than we can imagine.
- As our Representative He doesn't take our place. Rather **he acts on our behalf.**
- He always has represented and always WILL represent his people before the face of God, the throne of grace and the judgment seat. He stands for us, and we are present in him.
- This means we are chosen in him, accepted in him, righteous in him, glorious in him. Whatever he is before God, he is for us. And so we are complete in him.
- Under the New Covenant, Christ is our covenantal representative before God.

Jesus helps us by combating temptation on our behalf and we are praying in our weakness and putting our trust in his active obedience here that stood victorious in the face of temptation.

Let's look at the second way Jesus helps us as...

2. Our Redeemer who was tempted in every way

“...but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin...” Hebrews 2:15

There is another questionable assumption that comes out of this verse: I think we can read the verse to mean Jesus was tempted with every temptation possible. OR that He needs to be in order to redeem sin

But that is not what it says..

WHEN SCRIPTURE SAYS HE WAS TEMPTED IN EVERY WAY IT MEANS

Somehow, as a true man, God the son experienced the pull of temptation in ways that compare closely with the ways we feel tempted. His experiences are a real basis for empathy with our experiences.

Jesus can truthfully say, “I have felt temptation that is like your temptation.” He

knows firsthand the temptations that come with poverty, social and political oppression, betrayal, physical suffering, ridicule and public shame, danger, want of food and physical comforts, the sense of abandonment by God and close friends—a whole range of things that come to people in the normal settings of life common to all. Therefore,

Jesus has been tempted in all the ways that are common to humanity.

- Doesn't have to be a heroin user to feel those particular temptation for him to be able to empathize with heroin users. Jesus has his own intense temptation to draw from for relating to people.

What matters most is that Jesus was thoroughly tempted in a variety of occurrences in the setting of human life.

PREACH: Temptation is the pull on people to act against God and his order for human existence.

- In the wilderness Jesus was tempted in three manners common to our temptations. He was tempted to

PROVIDE FOR SELF PROTECT SELF EXALT SELF

Yet what we see is Jesus Redeeming through an empower grace in his humanity...what was lost at the fall.

- In the wilderness temptations, Jesus felt the blameless desire to end his pain of hunger by the wrong means suggested by the devil—to break from the Father's "provision" and provide bread for himself.

Instead...

- Jesus redeems the desire to provide for self, by trusting what God provides, even in fasting. He succeeded when he was hungry, whereas Adam and Eve failed when they were full.
- Jesus redeems fearful self-protection and the want to be right by living by faith in God's word alone. He succeeded by not testing God and jumping off the temple, whereas Adam and Eve ate the apple believing they would be right and wouldn't die.
- Jesus redeems the pull of status and self exaltation by believing the promises of God above everything else. He succeeded by putting God first whereas Adam and Eve put themselves first

Jesus helps us as he redeems the failure of Adam in the garden by succeeding in the wilderness

Remember that the Bible that says:

“For because **he himself has suffered when tempted**, [why?] so he is able to help those who are being tempted.” Hebrews 2:18

Here is how he suffered..

- The Son need only experience the natural desires to avoid pain and seek goods if he is to feel the pull of temptations.
- He suffered in the sense that he was subjected to temptations that he knew the underlying sway they would have to a human nature.
- Yet it was done under the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus did exemplify the perfectly submitted human, that was empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Bruce Ware puts it, “Jesus did not sin, not because he relied on the supernatural power of his own divine nature or because his divine nature overpowered his human nature keeping him from sinning, but it rather is because **he utilized all of the resources given to him in his humanity.**”

- **An empowered grace helped Jesus to live sinlessly in his humanity.**
- Again Christ could not sin because he was fully God. But Christ did not sin because he was the human Jesus, anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- This keeps the integrity and genuineness of Christ being truly God and truly Man without MIXTURE WITHOUT CONFUSION WITHOUT SEPARATION WITHOUT DIVISION when it comes to his lack of his ability to sin and having experience true temptation.
- Jesus fought through his temptation by living close to God through the receptiveness to the Spirit. Prayer to his Father, and reliance upon His Father’s word of truth. By the way there are your tools. Another whole sermon there...
- And at the greatest moment of temptation in the Garden of Gethsemane, he called his closest friends alongside to support him. There’s another tool in the arsenal of the fighting Christian... are you trying to fight your sin a lone? Get a friend involved. Any way.

That is our Redeemer ...

So he’s been our representative and our redeemer...

Let’s look at the third way The temptation of Jesus shows Christ as

3. Our Righteousness who learned obedience

“Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation”.
Hebrews 5:8-9

There is a third questionable assumption that we can read into this verse about Jesus learning obedience. It can be the idea that his obedience was automatic and easy for Jesus

But have you ever considered Jesus experienced many temptations in his relationships with people in which he had to learn obedience.

For example, he understands the distrust, rejection, slander, betrayal, assault, and malice by others that may have tempted him to take revenge.

Do you think that came easy?

- Jesus knows the temptation to do and say the things that could make him well liked by others.
- He understands the temptation of a growing boy to disobey his parents when they wrongly blamed him for negligence and pulled him away from enjoying the presence of his Father and theological discourse in the Temple courts (Luke 2:41-52). Yet Jesus obeyed His parent perfectly
- Through the things that Christ suffered, through the trials, temptations, and afflictions of life, he learned to obey increasingly difficult demands of his Father, remaining sinless in it all, until at last, he was prepared—made mature, if you will, strengthened in faith and character—to go to the cross.

As a true human being who suffered emotionally and physically (e.g., Heb 5:7-8), Jesus was also temptable because of his vulnerability to pain.

Think about it for a second

- in Gethsemane, Jesus desires to avoid the punishment for sin (which is a desire that leads to sin) and he desires to obey God (a desire leading to righteousness).
- Despite his high priority for self-preservation and the belief that evading pain may be possible, he chooses to obey God ...according to his highest value and desires to please his Father and accomplish redemption
- That same high value and desire to please His Father and accomplish redemption, was the same motivation in the wilderness temptation.

- He lived a sinless life that accomplishes for us a righteousness we could never achieve. And there fore offer an eternal salvation we could never earn
- Jesus' righteousness became our righteousness –credited to those who put their faith in Jesus. Our hope is built on nothing less than jesus blood and righteousness

Jesus is the suffering servant who is helping the tempted by being their representative, their redeemer and their righteousness.

He lived the prototype of a new covenant life by prayer and the Word and the power of the Spirit. He shares those resources with us and grants for us in the new life an empowering grace.

Paul in Colossians 2:10 says it like this “and you have been filled in him...” We are empowered by the same grace and made complet in Christ.

May we then be confident to live like Jesus, love him greater and to place our trust in him in times of temptation.

Let's pray:

Jesus, you are the one who has defeated the Devil, redeemed our fall and empowers us for victory. You have been tempted and tried and found sinless. Lord we cannot triumph over temptation, only you can. May we submit and fight by the Spirit. Form our hearts and mind to fully believe you are faithful to provide a way of escape. To help us to remember to be strong and courageous and that you will not leave us or forsake us and that only you are the one with authority that can tell the Devil to depart. These are the promises and graces that we trust in your work in our life and we are grateful and confident that they will come to pass. In Jesus name

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