

Guided Bible Study

The Third Temptation

Luke 4:9-13

- 9 And he brought him to Jerusalem,
and set him on a pinnacle
of the temple,
and said unto him,
"If thou be the Son of God,
cast thyself down from hence:
10 For it is written,
He shall give his angels charge
over thee, to keep thee:
11 And in *their* hands
they shall bear thee up,
lest at any time
thou dash thy foot against a stone.
12 And Jesus answering said unto him,
It is said,
Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.
13 And when the devil had ended
all the temptation,
he departed from him for a season.

Key Words _____

pinnacle = (pterugion) any pointed extremity

tempt = (ekpeirazo) to prove, test

season = (kairos) a measure of time; opportune; the right time

Guided Study

(Download and complete Discipleship Studybook Three to acquaint yourself with Bible Study Methods and Principles for Bible Interpretation.)

verses 9-11

1. Why would the devil bring Jesus to Jerusalem to cast Himself from the Temple?
2. From where does Jesus quote verses 10-11? What do these verses mean?
3. Do they apply to Jesus? Why or why not?
4. To what area in our human nature is this temptation aimed?
5. Are you tempted in this area of your life? Why or why not?

verse 12

1. How does Jesus interpret the devil's temptation?
2. **Underline** Jesus' answer to the devil.
3. In what way would Jesus, casting Himself from the Temple, *tempt* God?
4. Why should we not tempt God?

verse 13

1. **Circle** how long the devil departed from Jesus.
2. The phrase "*for a season*" can also be translated, "*until a more opportune time*". When translated like this, what do we learn about the devil?
3. What "*opportune time*" can you think of in Jesus' life might the devil have waited for?
4. How should this knowledge of the devil affect the way we live our Christian lives?

Principles & Truths

This passage of Scripture teaches that ...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

Applications:

In light of the Principles & Truths learned, I will ...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

Jesus Tempted by Pride

Luke 4:9-13

(Complete the Guided Study before reading this study to gain your own insights into this passage.)

There is something about being honored or applauded that appeals to us. "Not me" you say? Then examine your dreams and innermost desires. How many times have you dreamt of being someone better than you are ... being better looking, having better abilities, or possessing better accomplishments? Young boys dream of scoring the winning goal. Young girls of being the beautiful Princess who gains the Prince in a fairy tale.

None of us desires to be a nobody, rejected and dismissed by others. We all wish to be some body who is loved and admired. The third temptation appeals to this desire to be recognized and appreciated by others.

1. Satan Will Use Even the Sacred to Snare Us.

"The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down from here. For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.""

The temptation was plain enough. Leap from a tall building, be caught in mid air by God's angels and land injury free amidst the cheers and applause of thousands. The perfect way for God's Messiah to make a dramatic entry and prove He's superman!

But even more than the daring of this temptation is the manner it is presented and carried out. The devil, maybe in hopes of better disguising his evil intent, used the sacred in this final attempt to entice Jesus to sin. Having already failed twice, Satan boldly unfolds his final temptation by, incredibly, employing God's own Word (Psalm 91:11-12)! Be forewarned, the devil knows the Word of God, and he will not hesitate to use it to catch us offguard! It worked with Eve (Genesis 3:1-7) and it works still today!

Coupled with his use of God's Word is Satan's use of the Temple in this temptation. The magnificent Herodian Temple, with its many courtyards rising up to the imposing Sanctuary standing 150 feet high, and surrounded on all sides by porticoes supported by marble pillars. The Temple was the center of Israel's worship of the One True God where Godly men and women came to praise God. But for Satan, the venue for religious meetings was the perfect place to tempt Jesus to glorify Himself ... to say to people, "Hey! Look at me!" (Interestingly, he still uses that strategy today!)

Many Christians are keen to spot temptations dealing with worldly or carnal lusts. But temptations that target our need to be recognized and affirmed, and appeal to our pride, are more subtle, especially when clothed in the sacred. We erroneously think, "If we are in Church, among God's people and doing what God's Word says, then we must be doing God's Will!" Not if our motive is to glorify ourselves! Not if it is done to gain recognition and exalt oneself. Many in Christian ministry have fallen for this temptation and are using God's gifts for selfish glory.

If you are involved in ministry, ask yourself, "Is it for God's glory or my own?" "Am I dissappointed or even upset if I am not recognized or appreciated for something I have done for God?" Ask God to search your heart and reveal any sinful motives that might be present. Confess them and renew your commitment to glorify God in your service to Him!

2. God Will Not Be Manipulated!

"Jesus answered, "It says: `Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

From the moment we let out our first cry at birth we began learning the art of *manipulation*. How easy it was to train our parents to carry us, to feed us, or to clean us. And as we grew, we learned to be more subtle in our manipulation of others. Strategies ranged from the "poor me" (getting others to feel sorry for us) to the "guilt trip" (making others feel guilty if they didn't do what we wanted). But the results were the same ... catering to our own self serving desires.

Satan's final temptation used the leverage of obligation to force God to act, and Jesus saw right through it. The appeal to Scripture had nothing to do with pleasing God, but with using God to please ourselves! When God's Word is used in this way, we are putting God to a test to see if He will grant us our wish, ala a genie. That, says Jesus, is unacceptable! Cut it out. Don't test God!

How about us? Do we claim Scripture in asking God to fulfill His Word concerning a need of ours? If so, then what is the motive behind our requests? For whose pleasure is it made? And for whose glory will it result? Are we using God, or do we truly want to be used by God? There is a big difference between the two!

In a unique way, Jesus, as God Incarnate, might actually have been addressing Satan concerning Himself. Was He pointing His finger at the devil when He responded to him? Was He actually telling the devil, "Don't tempt Me!" We'll never know, but it is interesting to think about.

3. The Devil: "I'll Be Back!"

"When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time."

At the end of this period of testing, we are told that the devil left Jesus. If the text ended there, it would have been with a sigh of relief. But it doesn't. The final words are ominous and instructive. The devil left Jesus "until an opportune time."

Satan will never give up in his attempts to bring us down. On the contrary, he will bide his time and wait until we are more vulnerable. When we are tired, anxious, upset, or fearful. Be assured that even after we have experienced spiritual victory, the devil is thinking, "I'll be back" (Say it like 'Arnold' would.). He is the ultimate Terminator!

What does this mean for us? We must never rest in our laurels. never relax our guard. For when we least expect it and at our most vulnerable time, we will experience an onslaught of fiery darts. Our only advantage will be to follow Jesus' example and demolish Satan's deceptions with the Truth of God's Word (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). We must Trust in God's Word to shield ourselves from the devil's fiery accusations and attacks.

It is imperative for every Believer to study the Word and be ready at all times, for we can be sure of this, Satan will keep coming back ... at an opportune time!

Think!

- 1. How do people seek to become a "somebody" in society today?*
- 2. What do you learn about the devil from this temptation?*
- 3. What is significant about Jesus' response?*
- 4. What have you learned about Jesus from our studies of His temptations?*
- 5. Which temptations (Desire, Sight or Pride) are you most vulnerable to? What will you do to defeat Satan's attacks?*

Affirmations

(Recite Aloud Daily)

- 1. I Will Use God's Gifts Only for God's Glory.**
- 2. God Does Not Exist to Please Me but I Exist to Please Him!.**
- 3. Because Satan Never Quits, I Will Never Stop Being Vigilant and Alert for His Next Attack.**