

Led By God - Tempted as man

I. Slide1 **Announce:**

- A. Slide2 Potter's field. Slide3 Better Together Worship Night.
- B. Slide4 Stuff The Bus - Slide5 Parenting Conf at CCCM

II. Slide6 **Intro: Led By God - Tempted as man**

- A. Slide7 Sir Isaac Newtons *3rd Law of Motion, Every Action has an Equal & Opposite Reaction.*
 1. Action, end of ch.3 heaven was opened. Reaction, start of ch.4 hell opens.
 2. It seems like every action of God, there's a reaction from the devil.
 3. Fact of life...nothing promotes the **reaction of the devil, more than** the action of one's *proximity to God.*
 - a) Oh and...in **praying & fasting**, the devil knows is where we get our **strength**, so of course we're going to be attacked.
- B. Slide8 In theology, Jesus' self-humbling is called the *kenosis: the emptying.*
 1. Paul says in Phil.2:6-8, speaking of Jesus, **who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing** (or emptied Himself), **taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross.**
 2. When Jesus entered our world He set aside the power and the privileges of Deity. He consciously limited Himself to live here as a man.
 3. The miracles Jesus later performs was by the power of the Spirit.
 4. The emptying process Paul described is one of progressive humiliation. ***He emptied Himself - was born in man's likeness - was obedient even when it meant death - accepted even the shameful death of an outcast criminal.***
- C. When we read about the temptation of Jesus, we have to read the story against the background of the *kenosis.*
 1. When a physically weakened Jesus, after 40 days of fasting in the desert, was tempted by Satan, **He did not** seek strength from His divine nature to resist.

III. Slide9 **LED BY GOD (1,2)**

- A. He was **Holy Spirit led** - What comes to your mind of someone *being led by God?*
 1. Slide10 Did these words come to mind: devil, temptation, desert? Probably not, **but** that's where the HS leads Jesus here.

- a) The disciples were led by God right into a storm. Jesus led right into Gethsemane to face abduction.
- B. **Slide11a Tempted** - Aramaic *dnethnasey*, *to try out*. Men often *try out* their power & ability before they start a hard task. Oxen & horses are also *tried out* before they are bought & paid for.
- C. **Slide11b Wilderness** - a wild, arid, region w/o trees or inhabitants.
1. Though the desert **lacks** trees, villages & the attractions which make life happy in populous places...it has its own **natural majestic beauty**.
 2. George Lamsa, *The beauty of the myriad stars, by their seeming closest to the ground near the horizon, fascinates human imagination & reveals an order in the sky unexcelled by anything on earth. Living in these wide-open desert spaces, one is impressed by the vastness of the heavens contrasted with the smallness of the earth and life is revealed in its proper proportion to the universe. Away from the material things of organized civilization, the dweller of the desert feels that God is near, God is everywhere.* Gospel Light, George Lamsa
- D. **Slide11c Fasting** - is a help in subjecting the **body** to the **soul**, the **physical** to the **spiritual**
1. Fasting is not a sanctified diet.
 2. Fasting reduces **physical strength** but increases **spiritual forces** and is an aide toward **spiritual insight** and **character**.
 3. Here Jesus is on a long fast where **hunger** goes away after the first few days...but comes back right before you **starve to death**...this was **that** time.

IV. Slide12 **TEST#1 TEMPTATION AS A MAN (3,4)**

- A. **Command that these stones become bread** - in Eastern countries wheat is never *bleached*. The color of bread is **brown**, and when **baked**, the round loaves resemble **stones**.
1. Hungry travelers often see these hot stones and **wish** they were bread.
- B. The very first words of Jesus in response to Satan's initial temptation sets the tone...
1. **Slide13 Man does not live by bread alone**. Addressed as *the Son of God*, Jesus affirmed His intention to live on our earth as **a human being**.
- C. Subject, as you and I are, to the **hungers** and **drives** and **needs** which throb within us and seek to pull us into sin, Jesus met every one of Satan's temptations.
1. **Rejecting the privilege** that was His by virtue of His **deity**, Jesus cast His lot fully with you and with me.
 2. **It is because of this great act of self-emptying that you and I can find hope**.
 3. Jesus overcame temptation...as **a human being!**

a) Because Jesus met temptation in His human nature, you and I can find victory too (how?) by meeting our temptations *as He met His*.

D. *Source* - In each temptation, there is a *particular human vulnerability* which Satan attacked?

1. The challenge to make bread was a temptation because Jesus was **hungry**: it was directed against His *physical nature and needs*.

E. *Victory Principle in OT to act on?*

1. **Man shall not live on bread alone**, teaches that we are not to let the **physical dominate**, for as **spiritual beings** we are attuned to God, and can choose to live by His Word.

V. Slide14 **TEST#2 PROVING GOD'S FAITHFULNESS (5-7)**

A. *Wait, Satan fighting Jesus with the Word? But Jesus is able to parry each thrust of Satan's plastic child's sword, with the steel-bladed sword of Gods Word.*

B. *Slide15 Show the pinnacle of the Temple.* It's about 450' high w/Solomon's porch/columns.

1. Even *holy places* are open to temptation.

C. *Slide16a Pinnacle of the Temple.* According to the Jews, they believed *the center of the world* is Jerusalem.

1. They get it from Ezek.5:5 says ***This is Jerusalem. I have set her in the center of the nations, with countries all around her.*** [navel of the earth, axis mundi, omphalos]

2. Rabbi's would say, ***Israel is the center of the world, Jerusalem is the center of the land of Israel, and the temple is the center of the city of Jerusalem.***

3. *Slide16b So*, if you're at the **temple**, you're the very **epicenter** the earth. **So Satan takes in there.** Also, in Mal.3:1 ***Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple.***

a) Rabbi's said he'd show up *suddenly* on the roof for all to see [to center geographically/theologically]

D. *Slide16c* We all have times when we feel *deserted by God*; when things have gone wrong and we doubt His continued concern for us.

1. As the OT passages quoted by Jesus stress, the issue in this temptation was that of *putting God to the test*, to see ***is the Lord among us or not?*** Ex.17:7

2. We are to be kept in all our **ways**, **but** not in our **follies**.

E. *Source* - *particular human vulnerability* which Satan attacked?

1. The challenge was to doubt ***God's faithfulness***: it was directed against His *thoughts*.

F. *Victory Principle in OT to act on?*

1. **Not to put God to the test**, teaches that we must trust Him, trust His faithfulness, trust Him not by sight but by faith.

VI. Slide17a **TEST#3 QUICK AND EASY (8-10)**

- A. *All this I will give You*, the tempter enticed, *if You will bow down and worship me*.
1. The Man *born to be King* was shown the kingdoms that **would be** His, and they were offered they could become His **now**.
 - a) All the **suffering** would be avoided, all the **anguish** avoided, all the **rejection** avoided, all the **pain of a death** avoided (in which the weight of the world's sins would bear down on the sinless One). Slide17b *No pain, quick gain. aka The Easy Way*.
 2. Complete commitment to the will of God was Jesus' pathway to the throne. **There could be no shortcuts. There could be no other way.**
 3. **Can we imagine Jesus at the devil's feet?** What is the devil whispering to you not to wait for? A saved mate. Purchasing that item.
- B. Slide18 Before Jesus could rule, He had to learn by experience the fullest meaning of **submission to the Father's will**. The crown lay beyond the Cross.
- C. (10) **Away with you, Satan!** - then the devil left him & he scurried off like a cockroach to a dark corner. Lk.4:13 *Now when the devil had ended every temptation/testing, he departed from Him until an opportune time.*
1. **So the devil watches us for an opportune time. He watches to see did he/she wear their wedding ring this morning? He watches do you have wandering eyes? He listens for a slight falsehood.**
- D. **Angels came** - Probably hovering near by, longing to do battle...yet held back!
1. Jesus didn't cry, **Angels help!** Nope. His weapon was the Word.
 2. **Luke adds, Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit. 4:14**
 - a) Heb.4:12 *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*
- E. Expect Temptation to come, no one is immune to it.
1. **The Temptation to** be impatient, to fear, to have your joy robbed, to complain, to flesh out, to not minister to the **unlovely**, to show unkindness, to be slothful.
 2. **Pray that you enter not into Temptation.** Watch against it. Remember you can handle it (*The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure*) **And, don't add to them!**

F. Slide19a 4 Life Lessons:

G. In ch.3 we had a picture of Jesus submitting to John's baptism, *identifying* Himself fully with humanity. This morning we saw the picture of an *emptied* Jesus - *suffering, tested, opening Himself to the full force of temptation in His vulnerability as a human being.*

1. Slide19b Jesus truly was determined to be a **servant**

- a) The Incarnation did not mean that Jesus stopped being God, but that He had freely set aside His rights as Deity.
- b) The outward exercise of power and glory was not essential to Jesus' majesty. In choosing to empty and to humble Himself, Jesus displayed God's pathway to dominion, pathway to *KINGDOM*. vs.17
- c) How different from our way. Usually, manipulating people, always was trying to control, selfishness is perfectly opposite to *servant*.
(1) Our destiny is not to be found in *selfishness*, but in self-emptying.

2. Slide19c Jesus' full identification with us in our humanity offers **hope**

- a) If Jesus had overcome the tempter in **His nature as God**, we could hardly expect to overcome.
- b) So we can dare to trust that our dominion destiny includes power to overcome.
- c) You may feel **helpless**, or **trapped**, or **overwhelmed** by a life that is out of control. Seeing Jesus become vulnerable and victorious can change your outlook.
Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted (Heb. 2:18). In Jesus the **human**, you and I realize that we may be *vulnerable*, but we do have **hope**.

3. Slide19d Jesus' response to the tempter spotlights **resources that you and I can draw on to overcome**

- a) In each case, Jesus went back to *the Word of God* and found a **principle** by which He *chose to live*.
- b) **This is important**. It is not simply *the Word* that is our **resource**. *It is the commitment to live by the Word*.
- c) It is **resting** the full weight of our confidence on what God says, **and choosing** in each situation to do that which is in harmony with His revealed will.
- d) This **same resource** which Jesus used to overcome is **our resource too**. **But** we must use Scripture Jesus' way.

4. Slide19e Jesus is portrayed in Mat.3,4 as a Person in **full control...of Himself**

- a) In fact, we might even view this as the *central message* of these chapters.
- b) Jesus demonstrated His right to reign over us by proving that He had authority over the worst of man's enemies...**Himself!**

- c) Certainly Israel had known in **Herod** a king who had absolute power **over others**, **but** was powerless to control his own hatred and fears.
- d) Since then, in our **Hitlers** and our **Saddam Hussein** and **Pol Pot's**, we've seen again and again that *enslaving others* brings the ruler *no freedom within*.
- e) Yet it is *exactly here* that our dominion rule as kings, under the King of kings, **must begin**. We must gain power over ourselves: *power to humble ourselves, power to submit to God, power to give up our rights, power to obey*. Jesus demonstrated just this kind of authority. Jesus alone fully controlled the world *within*.

H. Communion:

1. Bread
2. Cup