

Introduction:

- I want us to look at winning the temptation battle this morning.
 - We all face it. And we are all called to overcome it.
 - We know this about temptation: There are no new temptations just newer ways of presenting it. 1 Cor 10:13 All temptations are common to man.
 - “It starts as a series of innocent departures, gradually leading to something more and something more.” Russel Moore *Tempted and Tried*
 - Temptation seeks to move us out of the place of security and into the wilderness. The problem with the wilderness is that there are things there that want to eat you.
 - Here is a thought for you. Temptation is not really about you. Temptation is an assault on the Kingdom of God. Ultimately, that is why you are tempted...to be taken out of the fight by neutralizing the threat.
- The Slaughter House: cows, lead peacefully to the slaughter.

I. Before the Battle

- A. There are several things we must know before we step into this battle called temptation that will help us. Jesus said it this way, “*Count the cost...*” Luke 14:28-ff There are four things you can do to prepare for this battle.
1. Work with the Holy Spirit. (Luke 4:1, 14.)
 - a) Note: vs 1 Jesus full of the Holy, was led by the spirit into the wilderness.
 - b) Vs. 14 Jesus returned from the wilderness full of the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - c) The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is essential. He is not a suggestion from God.
 - d) Cooperating with the Holy Spirit is essential. We want His help.
 - e) In Luke 4, the presence of the Holy Spirit before and after Jesus temptation can't be overemphasized.
 2. Know who you are.
 - a) You must know who you are in this fight. Your identity in Christ is paramount!
 3. Be armed with the Word.
 - a) Jn 6:63, His words are spirit and life.
 - b) “*For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable.*” (Hebrews 4:12–13, NLT)
 - c) “*Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*” (Ephesians 6:17, NLT)
 4. And have a way out.
 - a) Every good general has a plan in case ‘the plan’ does not work. That is not planning to fail it is planning to not be destroyed.
 - b) “*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." (1 Corinthians 10:13, NLT)

c) Escape= Gk. to avoid, to evade, an exit. So everyone experiences the same temptations. And everyone has been given a way of escape.

B. Jesus Before the Battle

1. He was water baptized. Lk 3:21

2. The Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form. Luke 3:22 "*and the Holy Spirit, in bodily form, descended on him like a dove.*" Spirit baptized.

3. *And a voice from heaven said, "You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy."* (Luke 3:22, NLT) He received a great word from God, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Having the assurance of sonship really prepares the heart to endure temptation. It's all about the your identity in Christ a relationship with God. It is our greatest strength against temptation.

4. He was very knowledgeable of the Word. Confounded religious leaders at age 12 with His wisdom and knowledge.

C. We like Jesus must prepare ourselves for the battle. He worked with Holy Spirit. He knew who He was. He was armed with Word and would blast His way out! *Jesus was well armed —baptized, Holy Spirit baptized, assured of his relationship with the Father and armed with the Word of God. But note that **the Spirit and the Word and His identity kept Him from defeat.***

II. The Enemy's Plan

A. Know you enemy. He has not changed in thousands of years. To get victory we must see the horror of what temptation really is in light of the victory we have in Christ.

B. The enemy is incremental. He is gradual and wise in his plans of destruction for our lives. He doesn't set you up to fall all at once. He lets you make a series of decisions in the wrong direction which ultimately brings you into his three fold strategy: He attacks our identity. He confuses our desires. He shifts our destiny.

1. He attacks our identity. This is the first step in the cycle of temptation. It is where the serpent tripped Eve and where He also attacked Jesus. (The serpent, a reptile, approaches Eve like he is Lord over her.) At the very beginning of the human story is the question: "Who are you?" Lets look at Lk 4:3,9 *If you are the Son of God...* is an attack on the testimony of Jesus and the witness of Father (attack on Kingdom). It is a question of identity. Who are you really? Your actions will speak for themselves. Ie. Esau sold his birthright because he forgot who he was.

a) Temptation is all about testing the Sons relationship with the Father. This is what is being tested in Jesus and will be tested in us. Jesus had a testimony: "I am the Son of God." The Father had a testimony: "This is my Son." In Jesus baptism He identified with us and the Father identified himself with Jesus. To win at temptation we have to know we are His!

b) Satan is attacking that testimony. Adam was the son of God Lk3:38, Israel was the son of God (Ex 4:22-23, Hos. 11:1) Jesus was the son of God, (This was declaration of His Kingship and of war!) We are sons of God. Satan is looking to exploit a weakness so that the destiny of Jesus is neutralized; so that the Gift that He is and the gift that he carries is compromised and rendered ineffective. That is what Satan is after in each of us. It is not about the 'apple' it about the neutralizing of the kingdom within you and your family, and realm of influence.

- c) This temptation challenged Jesus to doubt His position or undermine his confidence. It is also a temptation for Jesus to prove He is the Son of God. Again, it a question that is an attack on His identity. **“Identity confusion is the reason people are able to affirm one thing and do another.”** Russel Moore p. 36.
- 2. Secondly, Satan confuses our desires.
 - a) James 1:14 James each of us are tempted when we are lured away by our own evil desires. God designed us to recognize beauty, power, and influence. That is how he was able to tempt Eve with the fruit. He lured her away. (That apple was appealing. She would be like God.) Ie. Again, Esau could smell the stew. He was lured away from his identity by his desires. His desires lured him to death.
 - b) Demonic powers work not in opposition but in full cooperation of what you want.
 - c) Satan tempts us and God tests us. Two different things that have to do with motives. Satan’s motive is to lead us away from our identity with Christ. God tests us so that we know that we are identified with Christ. Adam, Israel, Job, David, Saul, etc. Ie. Dt 1:31 In the wilderness almost immediately the Israelites start questioning are we the sons of God? Which allows them to confuse their desire and complain against God.
 - d) Jesus had to reclaim human desire under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.
- 3. He seeks to shift our destiny.
 - a) the final step of temptation is the challenging of your future, your destiny. James 1:15 Desire gives way to sin, sin when full grown leads to death. ****Temptation only works if the possible futures life is concealed. Ie. Had Adam and Eve known the future of the wrong choice they would have never eaten the fruit! Satan’s cover/ lie...”You will not die.”
 - b) What Esau lost was not simply his. It belonged to his entire family line. Now it was gone and never to be regained.
 - c) The Kingdom of God is opposite the desert! And Satan does not want any of us to have it.
 - d) Your future with out God is the worse horror story you will ever know. If you can see and see what God is offering instead it will affect your choice. Ie. Woman in blood room of the slaughter house. Freaks out until she sees the bigger picture.

III. The Strategy to Win

- A. Get Saved. Don’t messed around in life without God. You must invite Jesus into your life and ask Him to be Lord. Ro 10:9,10. Confess that He is Lord and believe God raise him from the dead.
- B. Be filled with the Holy Spirit and let Him lead your life. The Holy Spirit is our helper. He will lead. He will help us to overcome and see the way out...Jesus!
- C. Know who you are! And know whose you are!
- D. Carry the Sword of the Spirit...it is written.

Conclusion:

- Don’t be led as a cow to the slaughter. See the big picture today. This is about your destiny and your part in the Kingdom of God.