

Gospel of Luke

House Group Notes for Luke 4:1-13 based upon sermon series



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“THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL COME UPON YOU AND THE POWER OF THE MOST HIGH WILL OVERSHADOW YOU” LUKE 1: 35

What do you think the devil is trying to achieve in Luke 4:1-13?

In the previous 3 chapters, we are told a lot about God's purposes through Jesus and who he is – skim through these chapters and build up a picture of what the angels and prophets say Jesus is going to be and do. Just after this scene, Jesus goes public.

Do you think that the devil is trying to derail God's plan? If so how, do these tests attempt to do it?

The first temptation

encourages Jesus to stop focusing upon God's purposes and focus upon his own needs. It also goads Jesus into using his power independently of God and to not trust God to supply his physical needs if he remains focused upon God's purposes. How important is it to remain focused on God's purposes even if we are hungry? Eating isn't a sin; why couldn't Jesus have just made the bread and eaten it?

The second temptation

encourages Jesus to focus on getting the Kingdom (the prophets said he would have a kingdom), but not to follow God in how this would happen. Jesus' path included suffering and death, but the devil offers a way out. He encourages Jesus to take his eyes off God's ways and appeals to pride and desire for an easy life. How important is the journey or is it just the destination that matters?

The third temptation

seems to appeal to doubt - the devil suggests even if Jesus is faithful to God, God may not be faithful to Jesus and Jesus should test it. Is testing God the right way to handle our doubts? If not, how?

DISCUSS FURTHER

1. How much do you think the Israelites in Jesus time wanted another "exodus" – to be freed from slavery by their God?
2. "The command of God contains within it the provision of God"
3. The devil attacks when we are at our most vulnerable, when perhaps we are hanging on by the 'thin thread of grace.' How can we support each other in such times? Do you feel you could tell people if you were really struggling? Does scripture help?

LUKE 4:1-13 (NIV)

The testing of Jesus in Luke and the Israelites in Deuteronomy. Each was tested for their faithfulness to God and his purposes - a light to the nations.

4 ¹Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert ²where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.

³ The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.”

⁴ Jesus answered, “It is written, ‘Man does not live on bread alone.’”

Do Not Forget the Lord
Deuteronomy 8:3:

¹ Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land that the Lord promised on oath to your forefathers. ²Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. ³He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord...

⁵ The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶ And he said to him, “I will give you all their authority and splendour for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. ⁷ So if you worship me, it will all be yours.”

⁸ Jesus answered him, “It is written ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’”

Love the Lord your God
Deuteronomy 6:13:

⁴ Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ⁵ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

⁶ These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.... ¹³ Fear the Lord your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name. ¹⁴ Do not follow other gods, the gods of peoples around you...

⁹ 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. ¹⁰For 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.”

Psalm 91: ⁹ If you make the Most High your dwelling... ¹⁰ then no harm will befall you, no disaster will come near your tent. ¹¹ For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; ¹² they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone...

¹² Jesus answered, “It says, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

Love the Lord your God
Deuteronomy 6:16: ¹⁶ Do not test the Lord your God as you did at Massah. ¹⁷ Be sure to keep the commands of the Lord your God and the stipulations and decrees he has given you. ¹⁸ Do what is right and good in the Lord’s sight, so that it may go well with you...

¹³ When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.

