

Luke 4

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The unfortunate reality of having to deal with the demonic world!

This chapter spends a lot of time on the topic of Satan and demons. A few things caught my eye. Ever stop to consider that Satan and demons realize Jesus is God? That's something Christian cults and other religions deny. Made me ponder, if Satan realizes Jesus is God and He created Satan, can Jesus fall to a temptation? Why did Satan bother? I'd argue Jesus as human was tempted and the temptations were to take shortcuts and avoid God the Father's will. In the Gospels, demons work around Jesus even though they feared Him. Demons want to lead people away from Him so and that means working where Jesus was located. I noticed demons asked if this is "the time", referring to being sent to hell meaning they're not all-knowing creatures.

As I said in my title, this section of Luke focuses on being tested by demonic forces AND commenting on Jesus dealing with the demonic world. Jesus is teaching us it's possible for us to deal with that world and still be a good witness for Him! I realize we're not Him! We must remember He desires we use our lives for His glory. Luke gives examples in this text of how to deal with temptation and still be a good witness for Him. Let me continue:

Chapter 3 ended with the story of Jesus being baptized. Luke only includes certain Jesus' stories, but he wanted to emphasize His humanity. Chapter 4 opens with the statement that the Holy Spirit drove Jesus into a deserted area to deal with Satan. I suspect it was to show we as humans can be a witness for God even in the toughest situations. Of course, many tragedies occur in life, so the issue isn't guaranteed life here and now, it's about teaching us how to act in a situation of being tempted. Since Jesus is God, I do not believe Jesus sinned. I'd argue those temptations were to see if Jesus would take short cuts to avoid accomplishing the Father's will! Realize Satan is NOT all knowing. I pondered if Jesus can be tempted as human! The underlying issue is learning how to deal with temptation! The Bible teaches us how He want us to live. To state one of my favorite humor quotes, "lead me not into temptation, I can find it all by myself!"

A few thoughts on the famous three temptations stated here and in 2 of the other Gospels. I figured He was tempted lots of ways during those 40 days, but these three ones Jesus shared with the disciples. All this begins with Jesus being at a point of starvation. Since Jesus "Fed the 5,000" making food wasn't an issue. The temptation was not doing God the Father's will. The second was about jumping off the very top of a high spot so people can see Jesus has incredible powers! Again, the test is about not doing His will at any moment. I heard John MacArthur ponder, why didn't Satan push Jesus off? The answer is a test to see if Jesus only does His Father's will. The final test Jesus seeing all the world's kingdoms. The way I visualize it is a multi-screen presentation. I remember being taught, one can't be tempted to buy a thing unless one is convinced the seller owns it! The temptation here is that Jesus loves people, so it's a temptation to redeem all people. God gave us free will, so we must choose to be with Him! What is to be learned is despite being truly tempted, Jesus focused on what's God the Father's will! Yes, I realize we don't always know His will, but if something violates Biblical principles that's a clue!

From there Luke moves to discussing Jesus in His hometown of Nazareth. It is off "the beaten path" in a remote part of Israel. Jesus speaks at his hometown synagogue in this scene. Those at the synagogue probably knew Jesus from childhood! He was asked to read and given an Isaiah scroll. That means He knew how to read! The scroll was either in Hebrew or Greek and Jesus spoke Aramaic, roughly similar

to Hebrew! Remember there were no chapter numbers, so Jesus knew exactly where to look! What He read ties to the coming of the Messiah. What is fascinating is He stopped on a comma. That comma is placed there by scholars and is not in the original scrolls. In the original Isaiah scroll, Isaiah goes on to discuss God's wrath. Just saying that comma has lasted for 2,000 years to date!

From there, the synagogue regulars stared at Jesus who sat down! Jesus said in effect, "I'm the Messiah deal with it!" Then to "rub it in their face", He gave two examples from 1st and 2nd Kings of how God did a miracle through two non-Jewish people. It's meant to show how Jesus will lead multitudes to trust in His sin payment while collectively be rejected by the Nation of Israel. The statement Jesus made got people there ticked off and they unsuccessfully tried to kill Him. The point for us is about being a good witness for Jesus despite the truth of His payment "hitting them in the face"!

The text moves on to a different story. This next one is despite Jesus' knowledge the Israelite nation is going to reject Him, He continued to do miracles to prove who He is. Remember Luke was not there to see all this and most likely got his information from other disciples and witnesses! Luke says, after the synagogue story, Jesus went to Capernaum, a city on the Sea of Galilee. (Don't worry that's not on any get into heaven test!) Jesus was teaching in a synagogue there and a man possessed by a demon said he knew Jesus is the Son of God. As I stated earlier, demons are not "all knowing" and wanted to know if this is the end! Jesus ignored the question as He ordered the demon to come out of the man for the sake of the man's health. A few related thoughts, demons are not scared to enter Jewish (or Christian) places of worship! Their goal is to drive people away from God or make them bad witnesses for Jesus! There is no "magic prayer" to drive demons away. They fear those who give their lives to Jesus and then such demons must go elsewhere! Just saying in such situations, it's best to just preach the Gospel. The point is about being a good witness for Jesus, even when it's scary to do so! At that synagogue, people there were amazed how that bad person was changed.

A few final thoughts about dealing with demons. They cannot embody believers. Obviously, they want to tempt or frighten us to be a bad witness. So how does one tell if someone's possessed? Usually, it is obvious based on how they act. I once heard a Catholic exorcist state eliminate all other possibilities, at that point assume the worst!

Anyway, time for Jesus and us to move on. He's still in Capernaum. Peter (known as Simon then) did ask Jesus to come to his house as his mother-in-law had a deadly high fever. Jesus instantly cured her. I was always amazed how mom immediately started serving Jesus and didn't even have to rest up first! It's another example of a saved person, then using their lives for Jesus! Before he left town, Jesus also cured lots of people and drove lots of demons out of people! I love the fact that the demons will refer to Jesus as "Son of God". Cults and other religions deny that, but demons know better!

The chapter ends with the fact Jesus said he had to leave there to go preach else in Israel. OK John, we grew up with these gospel stories and most of us know them well. The underlying point isn't just to say Jesus did this and that, and "good for Him"! It is how God calls us like Jesus, to be do what God wants us to do and be a witness for Him, even in situations that are well, scary to deal with! Obviously, Jesus will not "drive us into the desert for Satan to test us for 40 days", nor should we read the Bible and say, this is about us! God allows us to be tested to see if we'll still be a good witness for Him! That is why He created us in the first place!

With that said, hope you like this study. I wrote a more detailed one some years back. If you want to read that, click on the link for the detailed study. It's still a joy to study this stuff and again I'm grateful for everyone who reads this.

