

Seeing Jesus: Tempted
Luke 3:21-22, 4:1-15
Sermon Outline

Introduction: The Christian message is not advice on how to be better and happier. It is the story of God's overthrow of an old and terrible regime.

I) Jesus, at the heart and head of God's new government, faced and threw down the master of the old regime.

A) The very first thing Jesus did after his commissioning was to face temptation

B) What is our deepest problem?

II) The heart-beat of old regime: Unbelief

A) Satan's opening and repeated line: *If you are the Son of God... (v.3, 9)*

B) Mistrust of God goes way back

- Adam

- Israel in the wilderness

- Finally, a Champion: *It is written!* (v. 8, 10, 12)

III) Fighting unbelief with Jesus' help

A) Temptation # 1: *...command the stone to become bread (v. 3)*

For Jesus: Refusing to exercise his power, but rather entering our experience

For us: To trust God for all our creature comforts

- When we lack them
- When we have the power to enjoy them: *Man does not live by bread alone...*

B) Temptation # 2: *...all this glory...if you will worship me (v. 6, 7)*

Seeking one's own glory

For Jesus: To seize glory rather than to defer to God's hand and timing

For us: *Let another man praise you and not your own lips.*

Content to be faithful

C) Temptation # 3: *...throw yourself down from here (v. 9)*

For Jesus: Refusing to force God to prove his love

For us: Trusting that God loves us even when life is boring

Conclusion: Things are OK, deeply so, because we have a Champion who has broken unbelief

Questions for Reflection this Week

- 1) What in your estimation is the one pervasive and deep-down thing whose eradication would fix the world's problems? How would a broad sampling of your friends at work, school, or in your apartment answer this question? What evidence would they give for their answers? What evidence would you give for yours?
- 2) Read over the story of the fall in Genesis 2 and 3. It has been said that the heart of Adam's and Eve's sin there was unbelief. Do you agree? If so, why? If not, why not?
- 3) Jesus' temptation in the wilderness is a deliberate re-enactment of Israel's testing in the wilderness. We know this not only because of the wilderness setting, but also because Jesus' answers all arise from Deuteronomy, the book whose setting is a retrospective on the wilderness wanderings on the eve of the conquest. Why the re-enactment?
- 4) To resist the first temptation is to trust God for all our creature comforts (food, clothing, shelter, sex) when it is not in our power to satisfy those needs. It is also to refuse to exercise whatever power we may happen to have in these areas simply because we happen to have the power at the moment. "Man does not live by bread (i.e., the satisfaction of human needs) alone—but by every word (including the words that regulate the satisfaction of our material needs) that proceeds from the mouth of God." List some of the ways that God's commandments regulate the use of the good things of life (like food and sex). Why is it sometimes hard to trust God enough to let his word regulate these things?
- 5) Jesus resisted the second temptation by refusing to seize glory for himself, even though it was due him. In what ways do we try to seize glory for ourselves? Why do we do this? We don't we need to?
- 6) To resist the third temptation is to trust that God really does love us, even though our lives are pretty routine. Do you find yourself ever pining for God to do something spectacular to prove that he loves you? How can you do a better job discovering his love in what he has said and in what he routinely does?
- 7) Spend some time thanking Jesus that he surrendered his power so that he could come alongside us and walk through "real life" with us.