

Jesus, the Model in Temptation

Wisdom for the Ages: Temptation is no match for the word of God. Message Magazine's Online Devotional for Sunday, April 15, 2018

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"Every word of God is pure: He is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, Lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." (Proverbs 30:5-6).

I would like to use Jesus Christ as the perfect Model to exemplify today's Scripture focus. You'll understand why momentarily. Are you ready?

Ministry in Full Force

John had just baptized Jesus in the Jordan River. The sign that validated His ministry was seen and heard by those who could discern them. The voice of God rang from heaven saying, that Jesus was His Son who pleased Him well. The Holy Spirit descended upon Christ in the form of a dove, perhaps signifying the peace that Jesus would make between God and humankind. By being baptized as our example, Jesus truly fulfilled all righteousness. He embarked upon His ministry in the full power of the Holy Spirit.

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred" (Matthew 4:1-2).

As soon as Jesus had become physically weakened from the lack of food, the devil appeared to Him to tempt and destroy. There is no doubt that Satan thought he could overcome Jesus because Jesus was clothed in humanity, but there is one thing he had not bargained for. He did not understand the vital connection that Jesus had with the Father. Jesus would not be overthrown by Satan's appeals.

Temptation One

The first temptation was geared to Jesus' immediate need, food. Jesus was obviously hungry and the devil tried to exploit the fact. "And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread" Matthew 4:3. Immediately, Satan tried to cause Jesus to either doubt His own identity or prove it by a method that no regular human could. He also wanted Jesus to indulge appetite as most have in the past, including Adam and Eve. Jesus was determined to be victorious in the same area of appetite, failed by the first two humans. "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4).



Jesus showed us that the word of God takes priority over the things of this world.

In this victory, the Lord wanted to show us that it is not only possible, but necessary to exercise self-control. When the Lord is in control of our lives, we will possess the fruit of the Spirit called temperance. Jesus also wanted us to understand that while temporal food is necessary for sustenance and nutrition, God's word is necessary for everlasting life.

Had Jesus chosen to perform a miracle to satiate His own hunger, we would be led to believe that the physical life takes precedence over our spiritual lives. This is not the case. "Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food" (Job 23:12).

Feasting On the Word of God

Many lessons can be learned from Jesus' victory over appetite, but one thing stands out. It is more important to follow every word of God as He gives us strength, than to indulge the flesh. Every word of God is pure. I thank God that Jesus did not fail, because it lets me know that I, too, can be victorious. It lets me know that He is still a shield unto those who trust Him.

A word to the foolish is wasteful. A word to the wise is sufficient.