

## “What Is the Secret to Overcoming Injustice?”

Text: Luke 4:1-13

February 8, 2009

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Oakland, California

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In thirty years of marriage James Dobson of Focus on the Family says he never considered committing adultery. But in Focus on the Family magazine he recalls one time when Satan tried his best to lure him into that trap:

Shirley and I had been married just a few years when we had a minor fuss. It was not big deal, but we both were pretty agitated at the time. I got in the car and drove around for about an hour to cool off. On the way home, an attractive girl drove up beside me in her car and smiled, obviously flirting. Then she turned on to a side street. I knew she was inviting me to follow her. I didn't take the bait. I just went home and made up with Shirley. But I thought how vicious the devil had been to take advantage of the momentary conflict between us. That's why Scripture refers to him as “a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”

So this morning, we continue our series, “Journey to Justice.” Last week I said that justice for the Christian simply means doing what is morally right according to God's Word, the Bible. This week I want us to look at “What is the Secret to Overcoming Injustice?” by examining the Biblical account of Jesus' temptations found in Luke 4:1-13.

### Read Luke 4:1-13 & Pray!

The key to overcoming injustice in your life and mine is this: **Know your enemy. Know your enemy!** The true enemy of justice and those who live just lives (righteous lives) is Satan. Family of God – Please hear me on this, we must not ignore the reality that there is a literal Devil who seeks to devour and destroy. It's important to know who your enemy is and how he works.

- Pastor

Jesus certainly indicates His own belief in the Devil's existence:

- The Devil is the evil one – Matthew 13:38
- He is the enemy – Matthew 13:39
- He is the prince of this world – John 12:31
- He is a liar and the father of lies – John 8:44

Other parts of the Bible also tell us about the Devil:

- He is the deceiver of the whole world – Revelation 12:9
- He is our adversary – 1 Peter 5:8
- He caused Job's troubles – Job 1:7 – 2:10
- He is the god of this world – 2 Corinthians 4:4
- He blinds the minds of unbelievers – 2 Corinthians 4:4

The Devil is our enemy and the enemy to everything that is morally right according to God's word. What is his MO (modus operandi)?

- Jesus tells us in John 10:10, *“The thief comes only to kill and steal and destroy. I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.”*

- What a contrast. The thief is Satan and he destroys life. Jesus gives life. Satan is evil and Jesus is righteous.

Why does Satan hate humanity so much?

- We're created in the image of God and since Satan is an enemy of God, humanity is his enemy as well.
- The devil constantly fights against God and those who follow and obey God. He will do everything he can to keep people away from God.
- One of the obvious ways is through temptation.

So, let's consider the area of temptations in our lives. The word temptation means to entice or allure to do something wrong. Satan uses the weaknesses and limitations of human beings to entice them to sin, knowing full well that sin separates us from God.

So, to better understand how God helps us when we're faced with temptations, let's look more closely at Jesus in our account from Luke this morning:

### I. The three temptations

A. *"If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread."* The test is to trust God with **provision** for our needs. Knowing Jesus' hunger, the Devil tempts Jesus to use His power to turn a stone into a fresh loaf of hot bread. Sometimes what we are tempted to do isn't wrong in itself. Turning the stone into bread wasn't necessarily bad. The sin was not in the act but in the reason behind it. The devil was trying to get Jesus to take a shortcut. Would Jesus use His own power to provide for Himself or would Jesus choose to trust the Father to meet His needs?

1. Everyone of us has the same basic needs in life (food, clothing, shelter). God has promised to take care of our basic needs. When we focus all our attention on the things of this world, our basic needs and more (consumerism), it's easy to put God second and even lower behind our wants and needs. Buying, buying and buying means all our attention is on our wants and needs, and our relationship with God falters.

- Matthew 6:33, *"Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things (basic needs) will be given to you as well."*
- The Kerr's

2. Matthew 4:3, Jesus responds, *"People do not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."*

Jesus is saying, "We will not find life in material things, but in God."

B. Showing Jesus all the kingdoms of the world, the devil says to Jesus in verse 6, *"I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. So if you worship, me, it will all be yours."*

1. **The easy way out.** Satan tempted Jesus with compromise. Jesus knew that He must go to the cross and die for the sins of the world. Satan was trying to divert Jesus from His mission by winning His worship. Satan was offering Jesus an easy way out. Give your allegiance and service to Satan and you can short cut your way to world dominion.

2. The devil said, "I have people. Don't set your standards so high. Strike a bargain with me. Just compromise a little with evil and people will follow you." Back came Jesus' answer, "God is God, right is right and wrong is wrong. There can be no compromise in the war on evil." Once again Jesus responds with scripture.

3. Isaiah 1:16-17, *“Stop doing wrong, learn to do what is right!”* It is a constant temptation to seek to win people by compromising with the standards of the world. Theologian G.K. Chesterton said that the tendency of the world is to see things in terms of uncertain grey; but the duty of the Christian is to see things in terms of black and white.
    - Ikea commercial
    - Satan’s tactic is to make important issues grey.
  4. Are there areas in your life where you are compromising with the world, worshiping the world instead of God?
- C. Temptation three, vs. 9-11: *“If you are the Son of God,’ he said, ‘throw yourself down from here. For 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.”*
1. Twice Jesus used the Word of God to thwart Satan’s attacks. This time Satan **misrepresents scripture (misrepresents God)**. The intention of Psalm 91, quoted here, is to show God’s protection of His people, not to incite them to use God’s power for sensational or foolish displays.
    - Garden of Eden
    - Satan tries to get us to doubt God and His word.
    - Apartment
  2. 2 Corinthians 1:20, *“No matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ.”* God’s promises are always true for the follower of Jesus Christ. God fulfills His promises His way, not always the way we intended or on our time schedule.
  3. As Christians we live our lives trusting in God’s promises, not twisting them around for own pleasure.

II. The most important thing to witness in Jesus’ temptations is that the Lord used the Word of God to counter any attacks Satan tried to throw His way.

- A. The Apostle Paul says to us in Ephesians 6 that we are to put on the full armor of God against Satan and evil. We are to take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take up the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God and pray in the Spirit. The battle is spiritual and must be fought in God’s strength, depending on the word of God through prayer.
- B. Satan is going to fling arrows your way and mine, but when you know God’s word and are in prayer – you have the best weapon against Satan’s attacks.

We have faith and trust in God’s promises. But know this too: Satan also knows Scripture and is adept at twisting it to suit his purposes. So, I want to give you just a few Scriptures to help you when temptations cross your path:

- Hebrews 2:18 – *“Because He Himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.”* Call upon the Lord when you face temptation. Jesus will help you conquer them. Simply say this simple prayer: “Help me, Jesus.” That’s it. “Help me, Jesus.”
- 1 Corinthians 10:13 – *“No temptation has seized you that except what is common to us all. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”*
- 2 Timothy 2:22 – *“Flee the evil desires of youth...”*

- Ecclesiastes 4:9 – *“Two are better than one...”* Ask a brother or sister to pray for you. God gave us one another for help and encouragement. Life Groups are a safe and wonderful community to ask for prayer with any struggles you face.

One scripture for when we've made the wrong choice:

- 1 John 1:9 – *“If you we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”*
  - \* No blame game. God has given you the freedom of choice. If we've blown it and given in to temptation, own it and confess it to God. Then,
  - \* Ask God for forgiveness...no more guilt and shame. God doesn't remember your sin anymore.

The secret to overcoming injustice begins with a life following the right way to live – Jesus' way. We also need to understand that the schemes of God's enemy too will come across our paths. Stay strong in Jesus!

**PRAY!**