

Are You Prepared to Fight a Lion? ***Luke 4.1-13***

I. Introduction

A. Fighting Lions

1. Lion tamer: stool, whip, and lion
2. **Samson:** Judges 14.5-6: And behold, a young lion came toward him roaring. **6** *Then the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon him*, and although he had nothing in his hand, he tore the lion in pieces as one tears a young goat.
3. **David:** 1 Samuel 17.34-37: And David said, *“The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”*
4. **Daniel: Daniel 6.21-22:** Then Daniel said to the king, “O king, live forever! *My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not harmed me*, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no harm.”

B. The Meanest Lion of them All: Satan: 1 Peter 5.8

1. Be sober-minded; be watchful. ***Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.***
2. Satan is constantly looking for opportunities in our lives to attack us and destroy us and our relationship with God.

II. Some of The Lion's Attacks

A. Eve: Genesis 3.1-6

1. Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’”

2. **4** But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.
5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”
- B. Cain: Genesis 4.7: If you do well, will you not be accepted? [1] And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for [2] you, but you must rule over it.”
- C. David: 1 Chronicles 21.1-17
1. Then Satan stood against Israel and incited David to number Israel.
 2. **7** But God was displeased with this thing, and he struck Israel.
 3. **14** So the Lord sent a pestilence on Israel, and 70,000 men of Israel fell.
- D. Job: Job 1.6, 9-12; 2.3-6
1. **1.9-12** Then Satan answered the Lord and said, “Does Job fear God for no reason? **10** Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. **11** But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face.”
 2. **2.4** Then Satan answered the Lord and said, “Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life. **5** But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face.”
- E. Joshua (High Priest): Zech. 3.1-5: Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord , and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.
- F. Peter: Luke 22.31: “Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat,
- G. Ananias and Sapphira: Acts 5.3: But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land?”

H. What results from Satan's attacks?

1. Some victorious, some defeated
 2. But always - Death, destruction, devastation; ruined lives and relationships.
- I. None of us are immune from his deceitful and cunning attacks.
- J. Are you ready to fight a lion? The meanest one of them all?

III. The Lions First Attack On Jesus: Luke 4.1-13

1. Jesus was physically weak, hungry, and alone
2. Satan's attack is sly, indirect
3. Yet Jesus did not use any divine powers to overcome Satan's attacks

a) Would have played right into Satan's desires

**b) Rather, Jesus did what each of us should do:
Trust in God and His Word.**

A. First Attack (2-4)

1. Attack: "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." (3)
 - a) Questioning His identity (Son of God)
 - (1) Satan is trying to cause Jesus to doubt who He really is.
 - (2) Odd, because Satan obviously knew who He was.
 - (3) And provokes Him to prove that He really is the Son of God.
 - b) Questioning God's love and care for Him (stone to bread)
 - (1) Suggests that really, God does not love Jesus.
 - (2) If God really loves you, why are you suffering from hunger?

- (3) And that God is withholding something; if God really loved you , he'd share everything
- (4) Just like Garden, Satan got Eve to look at the one thing she couldn't have instead of all the blessings she did have.
- (5) To turn stones to bread would demonstrate a *distrust* of the Father.

2. Jesus First Response:

"It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'" (4)

a) Jesus relied on God first, his response is TRUST.

- (1) This is first evident in "It is written" (and so stands), relying on the truth of God's words.
- (2) At baptism, Jesus' identity and acceptance by God had been made clear
 - (a) "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."
- c) Jesus' greatest need at that moment was not food, but spiritual sustenance.

(1) **Matthew 6.33:** But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

(2) Jesus must be first in everything, or he is first in nothing.

(3) Jesus had to trust God to provide for His needs in His time and in His way.

- (a) put our physical needs ahead of our spiritual needs, we sin.
- (b) allow circumstances to dictate our actions, instead of following God's will, we sin.

4. Satan attacks us by

a) Appealing to our determination to be self-reliant instead of depending on God

(1) We will never be tempted to turn stones to bread; cannot do miracles

(2) When we work so hard to earn our money to take care of our families, we must remember that it is really God's blessings.

(a) Consider the Rich Fool: Luke 12.13-21

(b) "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

(c) 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'

(d) So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

(3) Forgetting that Spiritual growth is more important than meeting physical needs.

(4) We become self-reliant whenever

(a) Instead of God's word we depend on our own;

1. Wisdom
2. Wealth, instead of God's blessings
3. Might, instead of God's strength
4. Righteousness, instead of God's grace.

b) Questioning our identity as God's people and our salvation

(1) Are you insecure in your relationship with God?
Insecure in your salvation?

(2) Easy to forget that when I believe, repent and am baptized, I put on Christ

(a) **Galatians 3.27**: For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

(3) We forget that we are children of God, a holy people

(4) Or we try to earn our own salvation through perfect works

c) When attacked: seek spiritual sustenance in God's word and rely on God, not self

B. Satan's Second Attack (5-8)

1. **Attack**: Showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in a moment (6-7)

"To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.

2. Appealing to the human desire for power and authority

(1) Not very different from garden of Eden: "You shall be like God."

b) Offering a short-cut to success.

(1) Essentially, Satan offers this — God has given me these kingdoms, and I am willing to give them to you, if you will put yourself under me, to serve me.

(2) Jesus could have all the kingdoms of the world without having to die on the cross.

(3) Serve just this once.

3. Jesus Second Response

It is written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve. (8)

a) There are no shortcuts to accomplishing the will of God.

(1) Satan wants us to sacrifice the eternal for the temporary by taking the easy way out.

(2) We must resist the temptation to sell out to “the dark side” in order to gain power, status, advantage or control over others.

(3) “I will serve God only”

(a) Whatever we worship, we serve.

(b) This would be violating the first commandment: “No other gods before me.”

(4) “My kingdom is not of this world”

b) True Power and Authority is found in service!

(1) Jesus’ leadership is to lead in the the right way for the right reasons

(2) in humility serving others for their benefit: never for the sake of power, status or ego.

4. Satan attacks us by...

a) Trying to get us to take the easy way out to success, victory and growth

(1) Serving anything but God, just once!

- b) Avoiding suffering
- c) Appealing to our egos, arrogance, and desire to lead, to succeed; power and prestige
- d) When you are attacked
 - (1) Remember that suffering has benefits in growing faith.
 - (2) There is no short cut, and cheaters never prosper.
 - (3) Remember to serve and be humble; and serve only God.

C. Satan's Third Attack (9-12)

1. **Attack:** "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,' and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" (9-11)

- a) Deceitful use of the Scriptures

- (1) Satan not only used the scriptures, he used them in context.
- (2) Sadly, there are some who will twist the scriptures
 - (a) Matthew 22.29: But Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God."

- b) Dramatic display of trust.

- (1) If you really trust God, and you know God promised to take care of you, then why not jump and prove that you trust Him and He is trustworthy.
- (2) This is a cheap way of showing trust; it is really false trust!**

2. **Jesus Response:**

“It is said, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” (12)

- a) God’s promises for our protection are meant for us to trust, never act in presumption.

(1) Don’t challenge God to prove himself.

- (a) Israelites did this in the wilderness; crying out for water and food
- (b) Instead of trusting in God and praying; they challenged and complained.
- (c) If God does not give into our demands, then He is not really God and His promises mean nothing.
- (d) Don’t act foolishly and carelessly and expect God to get you out of a jam.

(2) Don’t conduct reckless, pointless experiments with God.

(a) Actions have consequences

- 1. While such actions may look like heroic and supreme trust in God: it is false trust.

(b) If you break God’s laws, there will always be a cost.

- 1. We live in an orderly universe; it runs on certain principles and laws.
- 2. If we try to go beyond those boundaries, there will be consequences

(c) Physically: Try to jump off of tall building; there will be natural consequences

(d) Morally

1. Break God's moral laws (stealing, murder, fornication) there are consequences
2. Create pain, damage relationships, and spiritual death
3. Works same as physical laws.

(3) We need to live carefully, using sound judgment and reject recklessness (physically and morally). Respect the boundaries and principles God has established for our lives.

b) Answering with clear scripture

(1) Use scripture to do what is wrong, as clearly stated in other passages.

(2) Bereans examine teachings of Paul: Acts 17.11: they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

3. Satan attacks us by...

- a) Testing God; trying to make God prove Himself by our standards.
- b) Denying that actions have consequences
- c) When you are attacked: Don't try to put God on the spot to help you out of a jam.

IV. Prepare Yourself to Fight the Lion

A. Prepare for the Attack

1. Don't be naive and think that Satan will not or cannot attack you.

2. Set clear boundaries and limits for yourself before you are tempted.
3. Satan planned on returning to tempt Jesus again “until an opportune time” (Luke 4.13)
 - a) Through Peter: “Get behind me Satan”
4. Prepare NOW for the attack.

B. Keep your guard up at all times

1. Temptation is rarely an obvious assault. It is usually sly, deceptive, hidden.
2. Usually it doesn't say: “Do something evil”
3. Rather: “It wouldn't be so wrong, would it?” “Do it just this once.” “No one will know.”
4. Makes wrong look attractive, wise, acceptable, noble, and pleasant.
5. Be like Jesus: keep your guard up: Luke 4.13: And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

C. Be especially careful about temptation when you are at a low point.

1. Satan attacked Jesus when he was hungry, weak, and alone.
2. When you are feeling discouraged, weak, lonely, abandoned and dejected it is easy to seek something, anything to fill that emptiness or relieve that pain.
3. Satan will offer you something that will temporarily fill that void; but in the end, you'll be emptier, needier, and more desperate.

D. Avoid situations where you know you are prone to temptation

1. Satan took Jesus to three different places to intensify the temptation
 - a) In the desert, on the mountain top, in Jerusalem on the pinnacle of the temple (Holy city)
 - (1) You can be tempted any where: right here right now; or at a bar.
2. If a certain place, activity or people have led to temptation and sin in the past, then make sure you avoid those people, places and activities.
 - a) Don't flirt with temptation:. Proverbs 7.6-9
 - b) 1 Corinthians 15.33: Do not be deceived: "Bad company ruins good morals ."
 - (1) Instead, run away. Don't entertain it for even a moment.
3. Fill your life with good things and good people
 - a) good friends and companions: Christians
 - b) meaningful activities: Bible Studies, recreation
 - c) temptation is more easier to overcome when we have the aid of moral strength of others
 - (1) Ecclesiastes 4.12: And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

E. Seek Spiritual Strength and Sustenance

1. Pray for way of escape and strength to endure!
 - a) **1 Corinthians 10.13**: No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with

the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

- (1) **Hebrews 2.18:** For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.
- (2) **Hebrews 4.15-16:** For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
- (3) Jesus does understand real life: He faced real temptations that each of us faces.
- (4) And because He overcame, he can and will help us!

b) Seek prayers of others: Luke 22.31-32

- (1) “And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”

2. Recite Scripture

- a) Just as Jesus did.
- b) It means that we must have the scripture in our heart, in our minds
- c) We must understand the principles of the scriptures!
 - (1) Commit adultery: “Do not commit adultery” 7th commandment!
 - (2) Turn stones to bread: How would you have answered? It’s not as easy is it?
 - (3) Satan is often subtle, indirect.

d) Prepare for Satan's attacks by knowing the scriptures and their meanings

(1) Ready and think about Bible

(2) Listen to others: elders, parents, others who have struggled with similar situations.

F. When you fail, learn and grow

1. Jesus didn't fail, we will

a) But, Jesus was constantly dealing with those who had failed temptation

b) Peter, other disciples, Pharisees, Samaritan woman, woman in adultery, rich young ruler.

2. Deal with the sin: Confess 1 John 1.8-10

a) If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us

3. Do what is right:

a) Jesus to church in Ephesus: Revelation 2.5: Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first.

4. Help others:

a) **Luke 22.31-32** "And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

V. Conclusion

A. **Be prepared for Satan's attack and resist:** "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4.7)

1. Satan is attacking you - constantly, consistently

- B. ***If you are not a Christian***: you've sinned and need forgiveness and salvation: Believe

- C. If you are a Christian: you may have sinned - confess and seek forgiveness

Dave Stewart

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