**YIELD NOT TO TEMPTATION (#2)**

***Take a Sword to a Knife fight***

Winnie the Pooh, when hungry, said “I have a rumbly in my tumbly.”  He would then make his way to the honeypot and satisfy his “rumbly.”  When I’m hungry I simply make my way to the pantry or the frig and find something similar to Pooh’s honey to hush the growling (rumbly).  We who live in the 21st century have likely never experienced true hunger.  Starvation to the brink of death is not even on our radar screen of daily worries.  But not so with our Lord on the day the Spirit of God led Him out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

*​1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. 3 Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.”  4 But He answered and said, “It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’ ”*

Hungry?  When was the last time any of us went even 24 hours without food?  How about 48 hours?  72 hours?  Think of going 960 hours without any food!  Jesus did.  The Holy Spirit purposefully led our Lord to a place where food could not be purchased or even found.  Day 1 brought a “rumbly of the tumbly.”  Day 2 brought a growl.  Day 3 a roar.  Day 4 a fatigue.  Day 5, 6, 7 … 40 brought blood pressure drop, a slowing heart rate, dehydration, abdominal pain, fever, post-traumatic stress, the beginnings of organ failures, and swelling of the body (source: Healthline.com).  On Day 40 Jesus would be a weak, emaciated, skin-and-bones specimen of His former self.  His own mother and siblings might not even recognize Him.  In this weakened condition of starvation, used for centuries by trained interrogators to pry vital information out of captured enemies, Jesus was as low as low could be.  It was then that Satan struck.

Jesus was “*tempted*” by the devil (Mark’s gospel calls him *Satan* – Mk. 1:13).  Yes, the Son of God was “tempted.”  Luke says “*He ate nothing*” (Lk. 4:2) while sitting out among the “*wild beasts*” (Mk. 1:13), all alone.  Hungry beyond words and no doubt weak from fever, He now “*suffered, being tempted*” (Heb. 2:18).  It was here we learn “*He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin*” (Heb. 4:15).  But how?  How did He not sin when the deck was stacked against Him?  Three words.

“***It is written***.”

Jesus, in this very vulnerable condition, had so trained His mind and heart on His Father’s will that He had the “escape” route planned out ahead of time that He later promised all of us (I Cor. 10:13 “*God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it*”).  Knowing the holy scriptures gave Him the advantage that Satan wasn’t used to combatting.  Satan had brought a pocket knife to a Sword fight.  He just knew he had Jesus right where he wanted him.  But when he pulled out his Buck knife to go in for the kill, Jesus unsheathed a two-edged sword and cut him to ribbons (Heb 4:12; Eph. 6:17).

Paul tells us “*the working of Satan*” is “*with all unrighteous deception among those who perish because they did not receive the love of the truth that they might be saved*” (2 Thess. 2:9-10).  He then goes on to say, “*And for this reason God will send them strong delusion that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness*” (vs. 11).  Did you notice that twice Paul said the working of Satan condemns those who do not receive and believe the love of the truth?  In other words, Satan’s deceptions work only on those who do not know and love the truth.  Knowing your Bible intimately, and knowing your enemy’s tactics fully, you can “*resist the devil and he will flee from you*” (Jam. 4:7).  Or, as Peter puts it, *“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith!”* (I Pet. 5:8-9).

Jesus knew Satan and his schemes like the back of His hand.  Like Paul, Jesus could say, “*we are not ignorant of Satan’s devices*” to take advantage of us (2 Cor. 2:11).  We can counter every temptation using the powerful weapons put into our “*armor of God*” (Eph. 6:10-18).

Yesterday, we talked about using the weapon of fellowship with our brethren who would help “*bear one another’s burdens*” (Gal. 6:1-2; Jam. 5:19-20).  Today we overcome “*the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*” by using the Sword of the Spirit, the word of God (I Jn. 2:16; Eph. 6:17).

1. When tempted in the lust of the flesh, we say, “*It is written*” and quote Matthew 5:28-30; Job 31:1; etc.
2. When tempted in the lust of the eyes, we say, “*It is written*” and quote Exodus 20:17; Ecclesiastes 2:10-11; etc.
3. When tempted in the pride of life, we say, “*It is written*” and quote I Peter 5:5-7; Proverbs 16:18; Ecclesiastes 3, 6.

Jesus, physically weak and emotionally vulnerable, remained spiritually powerful by mastering the Word of God.  The Psalmist said it this way in Psalm 119:10-11,

*“With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!
“Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.*

The “*genuine faith*” in Timothy (2 Tim. 1:5) came from somewhere.  But where?  Paul tells us, “*from* *childhood you have* ***known*** *the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you* ***wise*** *for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.  All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete,* ***thoroughly equipped*** *for every good work”* (2 Tim. 3:15-17).

Like Jesus, take a Sword to a knife fight.  Satan will do the yielding.
“*And the devil left Him*” (Matt. 4:11).
“*Now when the devil had ended every temptation he departed from Him until an opportune time*” (Lk. 4:13).

Yield not to temptation.  Fight manfully onward.   – Rick