



March 8, 2026

Spiritual Warfare is Real

Luke 4:1-15

**Great highs are often followed by great lows: baptism to temptation
There are two kingdoms in conflict:**

1. The kingdom of light: God's kingdom
2. The kingdom of darkness: Satan's kingdom

You are in one of these two kingdoms (in Adam or in Christ)

Luke 4:1-2

1 And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness 2 for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry.

- Jesus is full of the Holy Spirit (from his baptism) — just as we should be
- He is ready to begin his public ministry: The inauguration and advancement of God's kingdom
- Jesus is led by the SPIRIT into the wilderness (see images on next page)



- God does his best work in us when we are in the wilderness
- Lasts for 40 days (note the intentional comparison with Israel in the wilderness for 40 years)
- To be tempted (Greek verb tense: repeatedly over the 40 days) by the devil
- The devil is a real person — a malevolent, dark, and evil creature
- He rules the kingdom of darkness
- He wants to kill, steal, and destroy all God has created as “good”
- He was a mighty angel (Lucifer) who led a rebellion in heaven (see **Isaiah 14** and **Ezekiel 28**)
- **Bottom line:** he wanted Jesus to worship him in heaven
- The sin of pride led to Lucifer becoming the devil
- **Remember:** they knew each other in the invisible, eternal world
- The devil approaches Jesus
- Jesus ate nothing for 40 days (the purpose of fasting - to be solely reliant on God)
- At the end of the 40 days, Jesus was hungry (weak and tired)
- Note: Jesus chose to be in this condition!
- Remember that Jesus was tempted like us regularly; but: without sin (from conception to 30 years old here.)

Luke 4:3-4

3 The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” **4** And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’”

- The devil comes to Jesus (I think visibly but can come disguised as an angel of light)...remember: they knew each other
- “If you are the Son of God...”
 1. Creating doubt in his true identity
 2. Trying to get him to question his identity as God’s only Son (the voice at his baptism)
- Turn the stones into bread — Jesus is certainly able to do this (feeding of the 5,000)
- **Remember:** Jesus is coming out of a fast and his hunger is rapidly returning
- **What is the first temptation?** Use your gifts and power for self, for personal glory
- The same is true for us
- Instead of trusting God to supply all our needs (and **HE** receives all the glory) — and trusting his provision
- Jesus quotes **Deuteronomy 8:3**
- Notice Jesus had **memorized God’s Word** (as a child?) and used it repeatedly to thwart the devil
- **Ephesians 6:17:** The sword of the Spirit in God’s armor — the only offensive weapon!
- Israel’s sin in the wilderness:
 1. Complaining which is evidence of unbelief
 2. Not trusting and obeying God (he supernaturally fed them: bread & birds)
 3. They died in the wilderness and never saw the Promised Land
- If Jesus gives in to this temptation, sin enters into his life
- The Trinity is shattered
- And God’s plan of redemption never occurs
- Jesus wards off this temptation

Luke 4:5-8

5 And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, **6** and said to him, “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. 7 If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” 8 And Jesus answered him, “It is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.”

- The devil takes Jesus to a high place in the wilderness
- Was it a view of all the surrounding nations?
- I think a supernatural vision of all the powerful nations that have ever existed
- The devil thought he controlled them all
- **Genesis 3** and Adam’s sin, at some level, gave dominion to Satan over this world
- Different Scriptures support this view:

1. **John 12:31**

*31 Now is the judgment of this world; now will the **ruler of this world** be cast out.*

2. **John 14:30**

*30 I will no longer talk much with you, for the **ruler of this world** is coming. He has no claim on me,*

3. **John 16:11**

*11 concerning judgment, because the **ruler of this world** is judged.*

4. **1 John 5:19**

*19 We know that we are from God, and the **whole world lies in the power of the evil one.***

5. **2 Corinthians 4:4**

*4 In their case **the god of this world** has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

- It appears the devil thought he had this power
- Again: “If you are the Son of God...” — relentlessly attacking identity (he always does!)

- **What is the second temptation?:** Worship self
- Jesus responds with **Deuteronomy 6:13:** *"It is written...worship the Lord your God..."*
- Once again: the power of the memorized Word of God
- A quick glance at **Revelation 5 and 6:** John is in heaven
- A scroll with seven seals: the deed of ownership of the world?
- First held by Adam (dominion over the world)
- Given to the devil in the Garden of Eden in **Genesis 3**
- **Question in heaven:** Who is worthy to break the seals and reclaim ownership?
- John weeps for no person is worthy
- Then John (and all of us) are reminded: **there is one who is worthy**
- The one John the Baptist recognized before he baptized Jesus:
- *"Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world"*
- Jesus is the Lamb of God whose death on the cross takes away the world's sins
- He alone is worthy to take the scroll and reclaim God's reclaimed authority over earth
- **Worthy is the Lamb!**
- **Jesus wards off the second temptation**

Luke 4:9-12

9 And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, **10** for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,' **11** and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone." **12** And Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

- The devil takes Jesus to Jerusalem
- He takes him to the southeast corner of the Temple Mount and a parapet of the Temple (a 400-foot drop into the Kidron Valley)
- Notice the devil doesn't attack identity: it didn't work two times so he moves on to something else
- **The third temptation:** Use your God-given gifts to create a following
- Jump down the parapet and as you fall to the ground...
- The devil then quotes **Psalms 91:11-12** and the angels from heaven will catch you

- The devil can quote God's Word! He believes God's Word, but uses it for selfish purposes
- He just doesn't obey it
- The devil is a liar, Jesus said so (**John 8:44**)
- He knew God doesn't honor the sin of presumption
- He knew that God wouldn't send his angels and Jesus would die
- Then there is no cross! No plan of redemption!
- Satan's head will not be crushed as prophesied in **Genesis 3:15**
- **Satan's temptation:** People will marvel and you'll create a spectacular following
- Jesus quotes **Deuteronomy 6:16:** "*You shall not put the Lord God to the test*"
- BTW: The only time Biblically we are to put God to the test is with the tithe (**Malachi 3:8-10**)
- Have people follow you without having to go to the cross
- The crown without the cross
- **For me personally:** "David, if you take this stand, people won't come to MOHC. Or will leave..."
- Then how will you pay the bills? New home. You'll have to let staff go. Lose your calling."
- Notice the fear! The devil's calling card!
- The temptation to use God for personal glory
- My answer: "I worship and please God alone. He alone is my Provider."
- Jesus wards off the third temptation and look what happens next...

Luke 4:13

13 *And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.*

- The devil leaves Jesus "until an opportune time"
- Throughout Jesus's 3 ½ years of public ministry, the devil kept attacking/tempting
- For example, in **Matthew 16**, Peter tries to keep Jesus from going to the cross
- Jesus to Peter: "Get behind me, Satan!"
- In the Garden of Gethsemane: Don't go to the cross
- With us as well, the devil is relentless, looking for our weaknesses
- Putting bait before us (the devil can't force us to do anything)

- That's why we all need to:
 1. Remember **1 Peter 5:7**
7 casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.
 2. Remember **James 4:7**
7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
 3. Constantly pray, "Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from the evil one"
- In **Matthew's gospel**, the angels come and minister to Jesus after 40 days
- I think they brought him manna (angel's food) from heaven: bread from heaven
- The Father to him: "Good job, Son. You resisted earthly bread, I'll give you heavenly bread."

Luke 4:14-15

14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. **15** And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

- In the power of the Holy Spirit in him, Jesus begins his public ministry
- Jesus returns to Galilee where he commences his public ministry
- Through all the surrounding country
- Going first to synagogues (the Jew first)
- Being glorified by all (held in high opinion by the people)

Application — Please memorize God's Word:

- When spiritually attacked, quote **Isaiah 54:17**
17 No weapon that is fashioned against you shall succeed, and you shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord and their vindication from me, declares the Lord."

- When under demonic oppression, quote **1 John 4:4**
4 Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.
- When feeling defeated, quote **Romans 8:37**
37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.
- When being accused, quote **Romans 8:1**
1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
- When feeling fearful, quote **Isaiah 41:10**
10 fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

There are many other verses for times of need when (not if) the devil attacks!

Learn them with your children: Scripture put to music

- GT and the Halo Express
- Others out there
- Make up your own
- Added benefit: you learn them too

My final illustration: Once I went to the dentist ...